

November 2021

**OVERVIEW:**

Aetna Better Health of Louisiana (ABHLA) is aligned with the Louisiana Department of Health's Medicaid Services Manual, and would like to remind providers to refer to these manuals when submitting claims. If the manual requires additional guidance impacting reimbursement, the details will be outlined by ABHLA in the Provider Manual or in a supporting reimbursement policy.

On 11/9/2021, the Louisiana Department of Health issued [Informational Bulletin 21-26, Skin Substitutes for Chronic Diabetic Lower Extremity Ulcers](#).

Effective 12/16/2021, ABHLA covers skin substitutes for the treatment of partial- and full-thickness diabetic lower extremity ulcers when a member meets all the following requirements:

- A lower extremity ulcer is present and:
  - Is at least 1.0 square centimeter (cm) in size;
  - Has persisted for at least 4 weeks;
  - Has not demonstrated measurable signs of healing, defined as a decrease in surface area and depth or a decreased amount of exudate and necrotic tissue, with comprehensive therapy including all the following:
    - Application of dressings to maintain a moist wound environment;
    - Debridement of necrotic tissue, if present; and
    - Offloading of weight.
- A diagnosis of type 1 or type 2 diabetes mellitus;
- A glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) level of  $\leq 9\%$  within the last 90 days or a documented plan to improve HbA1c to 9% or below as soon as possible;
- Evidence of adequate circulation to the affected extremity, as indicated by one or more of the following:
  - Ankle-brachial index (ABI) of at least 0.7;
  - Toe-brachial index (TBI) of at least 0.5;
  - Dorsum transcutaneous oxygen test (TcPO<sub>2</sub>)  $\geq 30$  mm Hg; and
  - Triphasic or biphasic Doppler arterial waveforms at the ankle of the affected leg.
- No evidence of untreated wound infection or underlying bone infection; and
- Ulcer does not extend to tendon, muscle, joint capsule, or bone or exhibit exposed sinus tracts unless the product indication for use allows application to such ulcers.

The member must not have any of the following:

- Active Charcot deformity or major structural abnormalities of the foot, when the ulcer is on the foot;
- Active and untreated autoimmune connective tissue disease;
- Known or suspected malignancy of the ulcer;
- Beneficiary is receiving radiation therapy or chemotherapy; and
- Re-treatment of the same ulcer within one year.

## Coverage Limitations

The following coverage limitations apply:

- Coverage is limited to a maximum of 10 treatments within a 12-week period;
- If there is no measurable decrease in surface area or depth after five applications, then further applications are not covered;
- For all ulcers, a comprehensive treatment plan must be documented, including at least all the following:
  - Offloading of weight;
  - Smoking cessation counseling and/or medications, if applicable;
  - Edema control;
  - Improvement in diabetes control and nutritional status; and
  - Identification and treatment of other comorbidities that may affect wound healing such as ongoing monitoring for infection.
- While providers may change products used for the diabetic lower extremity ulcers, simultaneous use of more than one product for the diabetic lower extremity ulcers is not covered; and
- Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is not covered when used at the same time as skin substitute treatment.

## Prior Authorization

Skin substitutes require prior authorization and submitted medical documentation must demonstrate that the beneficiary meets all the aforementioned requirements.

NOTE: If there is no measurable decrease in surface area, or depth after five applications, then further applications are not covered, even when prior authorized.

Please note that providers may see reimbursement impacted if not aligned to the Louisiana Department of Health's Medicaid services manual within 30 days of the date of this reminder notification.

## Questions and Support:

For questions, please contact [LAProvider@AETNA.com](mailto:LAProvider@AETNA.com) or call 1-855-242-0802 and follow the prompts.

## A Reminder about the Medicaid Provider Enrollment Portal:

Don't delay in registering and submitting an enrollment application through the Louisiana Medicaid Provider Enrollment portal. Any existing Medicaid provider that does not complete the enrollment and screening process through the portal by March 31, 2022, will risk claim denials and disruption in patient care.

Medicaid Provider Enrollment Portal assistance is available Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Please contact (833) 641-2140 for assistance.