

## Purchasing Hearing Aids

December 2011

(Reviewed September 2015)

This outlines DVR's process for determining the rate of payment for a consumer's hearing aid and related services.

### Important Reminders:

- Determine that the hearing aid and related services are necessary and appropriate for the achievement of the IPE goal.
- Determine if there are any comparable benefits available before purchasing a service including the hearing evaluations (e.g. consumer's health insurance).
- It is recommended that staff use a licensed audiologist vs. certified hearing aid dispenser when evaluating a consumer's needs.
- Coding for hearing aids and related services:
  - **021 - Assessments** (hearing assessments)
  - **036 - Restoration Hearing Aids, Hearing Aid Related Equipment and Services** (hearing aids, dispensing and fitting fees, training on hearing aids)
  - **033 - Rehabilitation Technology Devices** (FM Systems, Bluetooth, loop systems, etc.)

*Note: if the rehabilitation technology is built directly into the hearing aid, code as 036.*

### Process for purchasing hearing aids:

1. Obtain Hearing Aid Evaluation recommending specific hearing aid(s). The hearing evaluation report should include why the specific hearing aid(s) recommended is/are needed. The rationale should include a pre-fitting assessment of the patient's type, degree, etiology, and prognosis of hearing loss, listening-needs assessment, and hearing aid fitting plan.  
HA/HAE- Hearing Assessment/Hearing Aid Evaluation.

The service provider should separate and itemize the cost of the hearing aid(s), the dispensing fee and/or other related items or fees (e.g., ear molds, FM Systems, Bluetooth, loop systems, fitting, etc.)

2. Determine if the service provider will provide the hearing aid at a cost not to exceed invoice cost + 15% and the Medical Assistance Maximum Allowable Fee Schedule dispensing fee. *Other customary and related fees described in #1 above are to be authorized and coded separately. Call service provider for annual increase in Medical Assistance Maximum Allowable dispensing fee.*
3. If the service provider will provide the hearing aid(s) at the cost described in #2, proceed with purchasing.
4. **If** the hearing aid(s) service provider will not provide the hearing aids at the cost described in #2, the following price comparison process will be required:

Contact two additional service providers to obtain an estimate for the same hearing aid(s). This request is for an estimate only and does not bind the service provider to fit the patient with the same hearing aid(s). This can be completed by searching prices on the internet. An additional hearing aid evaluation may be authorized when the counselor or the consumer has a concern and/or seeks validation of the original assessment.

Authorize the amount provided by the lowest estimate and the Medical Assistance Maximum Allowable dispensing fee. Explain to the consumer that they may purchase the hearing aid(s) at their preferred service provider, but that DVR's maximum allowable contribution towards the purchase price is the lowest estimated price that was obtained in the competitive process.

If you have any questions on this directive, please consult with your supervisor.