



To: Bariatric Surgeons, PCPs, and IPAs
From: IEHP – Provider Relations
Date: August 21, 2018
Subject: Bariatric Surgery for Morbid Obesity Guidelines

This notice is to inform you that IEHP's Utilization Management Subcommittee has retired the Bariatric Surgery for Morbid Obesity Guidelines, effective July 12, 2018. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Medi-Cal Provider Manual can be used in place of the retired Utilization Management guideline for members over 17 years old.

Listed below is an *example* of the required documentation for authorization requests. For comprehensive information, please refer to The Medi-Cal Provider Manual-Surgery: Digestive System at: http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/manuals_menu.asp?pg=&PgDwn=Yes&hURL=&qu=bariatric+surgery&Action=Go

- Authorization requests for surgery must include documentation of the following:
 - The recipient has a BMI, the ratio of weight (in kilograms) to the square of height (in meters), of:
 - Greater than 40, or
 - Greater than 35 if substantial co-morbidity exists, such as life-threatening cardiovascular or pulmonary disease, sleep apnea, uncontrolled diabetes mellitus, or severe neurological or musculoskeletal problems likely to be alleviated by the surgery
 - The recipient has failed to sustain weight loss on conservative regimens. Examples of appropriate documentation of failure of conservative regimens include but are not limited to:
 - Severe obesity has persisted for at least five years despite a structured physician-supervised weight-loss program with or without an exercise program for a minimum of six months. This is a requirement for surgery however not a requirement for authorization for consult.
 - The recipient has a treatment plan, which includes:
 - Pre-and post-operative dietary evaluations and nutritional counseling, counseling regarding exercise, psychological issues, and the availability of supportive resources when needed
 - Absence of alcohol or substance abuse problem in the last six months
 - The recipient has demonstrated motivation and compliance with pre-operative requirements and has a credible commitment to make the life changes necessary to maintain the body size and health achieved

In addition, the Bariatric Surgery for Morbid Obesity among Medicare Beneficiaries has been retired, as well. The National Coverage Determination (NCD) 100.1: Bariatric Surgery for Treatment of Co-Morbid Conditions Related to Morbid Obesity provides the same criteria as the retired guideline and can replace this guideline.

As a reminder, all communications sent by IEHP can also be found on our Provider portal at the following address: <https://ww3.iehp.org/en/providers/correspondence/>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the IEHP Provider Relations Team at (909) 890-2054.