

Alberta Aids to Daily Living

Bulletin #77

Information regarding the transition of AADL Audiology authorizations and claims to Alberta Blue Cross

General Information

Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) authorization and claim processing is being transferred to Alberta Blue Cross in a phased transition process.

By mid-2020, authorizations and claims for AADL audiology benefits will be processed through the Alberta Blue Cross Online Health Portal (OHP).

Audiology benefits include hearing aids, personal listening devices, FM/DM systems, bone anchored hearing devices and cochlear implant processors.

What is staying the same?

- Alberta Health will continue to be responsible for the AADL program; benefit eligibility criteria, funding levels, policy direction and governance, and product selection. AADL will continue to review exception requests and appeals.
- Benefits and eligibility requirements will not be impacted by this change.

What is changing?

- In mid-2020, Alberta Blue Cross will begin processing AADL claims and authorizations for audiology benefits.
- Service delivery will be improved by using Alberta Blue Cross technology to streamline the authorization of benefits and submission of claims.

- Vendors and distributors will need to sign new agreements with AADL and Alberta Blue Cross.
- Once the transition is complete providers will be able to check eligibility, determine the client's cost share status, create authorizations and submit claims via the OHP.

Provider Agreements and Registration

All providers (authorizers, specialty assessors, vendors & distributors) will need to register with Alberta Blue Cross for OHP access. Providers will be invited to register and will be provided with detailed instructions prior to the transition.

Vendors and distributors will need to sign new agreements with Alberta Health and Alberta Blue Cross.

Hearing Aids and FM Systems

Authorizations must be created prior to product fitting to determine client eligibility. Approved authorizations confirm that client is eligible for benefits and will be provided in real time.

Authorizations will require a signed client declaration form and audiogram upload. Scanning equipment will be required to upload the documents.

Vendors will submit claims through the OHP, which will calculate cost-share and upgrade costs in real time. Vendors will collect cost share when the client is picking up the hearing aids (the fitting date) and will be required to provide the client with a claim statement.

Even though the claim is submitted on the fitting date, a mandatory trial period of 28 days is still required where the client can return the aid to the vendor without penalty.

If a deposit or cost share portion is collected before the claim is submitted vendors will be responsible to ensure the cost share collected matches the amount on the claim statement and refund or collect any difference.

Service Certificates for repairs and earmolds will no longer be required.

Bone Anchored Hearing Devices and Cochlear Implant Processors

Authorization of implantable hearing aids will move to a web based submission system (provider portal).

Alberta Health Services (AHS) authorizers will be authorizing cochlear implant and bone anchored hearing device benefits directly through the OHP. AADL prior approval will no longer be required.

To submit authorizations, authorizers will need access to an internet-connected computer with web browser ability to upload clinical documents, a scanner and a printer.

Authorizers will be encouraged to register for OHP access in advance to prevent funding delays.

What are the next steps?

Once implementation timelines have been finalized, more information will be provided to program stakeholders.

Information sessions will be held closer to implementation date to review the details and answer any outstanding questions.

Provider agreements and instructions to register for portal access will be distributed in advance.

A step-by-step provider guide and training videos will be available through Alberta Blue Cross and phone support will be available when the OHP goes live.

About Alberta Blue Cross

Alberta Blue Cross is Alberta's largest benefit provider and provides health and dental benefits to more than 1.6 million Albertans. As an Alberta based, not-for-profit organization, Alberta Blue Cross has a unique legislative mandate to promote and support the health and wellness of Albertans. Since 1970, Alberta Blue Cross has worked closely with the Government of Alberta to administer their health benefit programs and develop a number of

customized processes that represent many of the best practices in health benefit administration today.