

# Medical Policy Updates

For criteria related to a medical decision call Care Management at 877-342-5258, option 3. Medical policies are available at [premera.com/ak/provider](http://premera.com/ak/provider) under Quick Links.

## Policy changes effective Feb. 15, 2014:

### 7.01.550 Knee Arthroplasty

New policy. The plan will begin medical necessity review for knee arthroplasty, and pre-service review is strongly recommended for all indications. Services that are not medically necessary will not be covered. The policy will address degenerative joint disease (osteoarthritis), as well as other indications when MCG™ Care Guidelines are met. Below is a summary:

#### Degenerative joint disease:

- Documentation of disabling pain or functional disability.
- An x-ray report is submitted including a Kellgren-Lawrence (KL) rating:
  - KL grades of 1 or 2 will be considered not medically necessary unless MCG criteria for other indications are met.

- For a KL grade of 3, documentation must show trial and failure of conservative therapies.
- For a KL grade of 4, the documentation must include an appropriate trial and failure of intra-articular steroid injections unless contraindicated.

Knee arthroplasty may be considered medically necessary for other indications when MCG Care Guidelines are met:

- Distal femur fracture repair in an elderly patient with osteoporosis
- Failure of a previous proximal tibial or distal femoral osteotomy
- Hemophilic arthropathy or limb salvage for malignancy
- Post-traumatic knee joint destruction
- Replacement (revision) of a previous knee arthroplasty in situations related to peri-prosthetic fracture, fracture of the prosthetic itself, or infection of the prosthetic. Other indications for revision will be reviewed for medical necessity.

Premera medical policies are guidelines used to evaluate the medical necessity of a particular service or treatment. We adopt policies after careful review of published, peer-reviewed scientific literature, national guidelines, and local standards of practice. Since medical technology is constantly changing, we reserve the right to review and update our policies as appropriate.

When there are differences between the member's contract and medical policy, the member's contract prevails. The existence of a medical policy regarding a specific service or treatment does not guarantee that the member's contract covers that service.

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026569 (11-2013)