Level of Care (LOC) — Hospital-Based Ambulatory Surgical Procedures

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Medical Guideline Disclaimer

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Definitions

| Adverse event | Occurrence which prevents the completion of a planned procedure and/or results in any of the following:  
| Hospital admission  
| Prolongation of existing hospital stay  
| Performance of additional procedure(s)  
| Subsequent medical consultation |

| Comorbidity | Presence of two or more concurrent disorders or illnesses |

| Endoscopic procedure | Procedure performed using a flexible fiber-optic tube with a miniature camera at the end, which enables the visualization of the inside lining of the digestive (gastrointestinal [GI]) tract. 
| Endoscopy is performed to diagnose and treat GI disease. |

| Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) | Sleep disorder involving the cessation (apnea) or significant decrease in airflow (hypopnea) in the presence of breathing effort. The level of obstruction (retropalatal, retroulingual, nasal or nasopharyngeal) is variable. |

| Surgical procedures | Operative procedures involving the excision of skin or mucous membranes and connective tissue utilizing instrumentation introduced through a natural body orifice. Minimally invasive modalities include the lasers for excision, as well as ablative technologies (e.g., cryoablation for tissue-freezing, radiofrequency ablation for tissue-heating, which leads to necrosis). Invasive procedures may range from minimally invasive dermatological procedures (e.g., biopsy, excision and deep cryotherapy for malignant lesions) to extensive procedures (e.g., surgical repair, transplantation, etc.) |
Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to communicate EmblemHealth’s position regarding the coverage of ambulatory surgical services (inclusive of, but not limited to, endoscopic procedures), which may be performed in the outpatient hospital-based level of care (LOC) setting.

Hospital LOC settings that are facility-based include the hospital’s outpatient departments, clinics or surgery facilities.

The hospital-based facility is regarded as a medically appropriate LOC setting for ambulatory services when the following criteria are met:

A. Geographic inaccessibility (i.e., alternative site is suitable to the procedure [e.g., endoscopy]; however, place-of-service is not reachable)

OR

B. All of the following are applicable:
   1. Procedure necessitates performance by a licensed clinician or requires the general supervision of a licensed clinician
   2. Either the member’s clinical status or the medical procedure necessitates enhanced monitoring (extending beyond that which is routinely performed in a “free-standing” ambulatory-based setting)
   3. Potential changes to the member’s clinical status could reasonably necessitate immediate access to a medical center/hospital-based setting in order to facilitate timely access to emergency services, appropriately skilled personnel and/or inpatient admission or intensive care.

Clinical conditions, which may be contributory to a significant risk scenario of sudden life-threatening changes include, but are not limited to, any of the following:
   i. Acute mental status changes
   ii. Anticipated use of prolonged anesthesia
   iii. Concerns regarding fluid overload status
   iv. History of significant instability during a prior procedure that is considered a risk for other future procedures
   v. Increased risk for complication secondary to comorbidity (such as that evidenced by an American Society of Anesthesiologist’s [ASA] class III physical status or greater)
   vi. Increased risk for excessive bleeding
   vii. Member is < 18 years of age
   viii. Member is pregnant

Limitations/Exclusions

All other uses of a hospital based facility for an outpatient procedure are considered not medically necessary.

References


