

441—78.14(249A) Hearing aids. Payment shall be approved for a hearing aid and examinations subject to the following conditions:

78.14(1) Physician examination. The recipient shall have an examination by a physician to determine that the recipient has no condition which would contraindicate the use of a hearing aid. This report shall be made on Form 470-0361, Section A, Report of Examination for a Hearing Aid. The requirement for a physician evaluation shall be waived for recipients 18 years of age and older when the recipient has signed an informed consent statement acknowledging that the recipient:

a. Has been advised that it may be in the recipient's best health interest to receive a medical evaluation from a licensed physician prior to purchase of a hearing aid.

b. Does not wish to receive a medical evaluation prior to purchase of a hearing aid.

78.14(2) Audiological testings. A physician or an audiologist shall perform audiological testing as a part of making a determination that a recipient could benefit from the use of a hearing aid. The audiologist shall report audiological testing on Form 470-0361, Section B. The department shall cover vestibular testing performed by an audiologist only when prescribed by a physician.

78.14(3) Hearing aid evaluation. A physician or an audiologist shall perform a hearing aid evaluation to establish if a recipient could benefit from a hearing aid. The physician or audiologist shall report the hearing aid evaluation on Form 470-0828, Hearing Aid Evaluation/Selection Report. When a hearing aid is recommended for a recipient, the physician or audiologist recommending the hearing aid shall see the recipient at least one time within 30 days subsequent to purchase of the hearing aid to determine that the aid is adequate.

78.14(4) Hearing aid selection. A physician or audiologist may recommend a specific brand or model appropriate to the recipient's condition. When a physician or an audiologist makes a general hearing aid recommendation, a hearing aid dispenser may perform the tests to determine the specific brand or model appropriate to the recipient's condition. The physician, audiologists or hearing aid dispenser shall report the hearing aid selection on Form 470-0828, Hearing Aid Evaluation/Selection Report.

78.14(5) Travel. When a recipient is unable to travel to the physician or audiologist because of health reasons, the department shall make payment for travel to the recipient's place of residence or other suitable location. The department shall make payment to physicians as specified in 78.1(8) and payment to audiologists at the same rate it reimburses state employees for travel.

78.14(6) Purchase of hearing aid. The department shall make payment for the type of hearing aid recommended when purchased from an eligible licensed hearing aid dispenser pursuant to rule 441—77.13(249A). The department shall make payment for binaural amplification when:

a. A child needs the aid for speech development, or

b. The aid is needed for educational or vocational purposes, or

c. The aid is for a blind individual.

Payment for binaural amplification shall also be approved where the recipient's hearing loss has caused marked restriction of daily activities and constriction of interests resulting in seriously impaired ability to relate to other people, or where lack of binaural amplification poses a hazard to a recipient's safety.

78.14(7) Payment for hearing aids.

a. Payment for hearing aids shall be acquisition cost plus a dispensing fee covering the fitting and service for six months. The department shall make payment for routine service after the first six months. Dispensing fees and payment for routine service shall not exceed the fee schedule appropriate to the place of service. Shipping and handling charges are not allowed.

b. Payment for ear mold and batteries shall be at the current audiologist's fee schedule.

c. Payment for repairs shall be made to the dealer for repairs made by the dealer. Payment for in-house repairs shall be made at the current fee schedule. Payment shall also be made to the dealer for repairs when the hearing aid is repaired by the manufacturer or manufacturer's depot. Payment for out-of-house repairs shall be at the amount shown on the manufacturer's invoice. Payment shall be allowed for a service or handling charge when it is necessary for repairs to be performed by the manufacturer or manufacturer's depot and this charge is made to the general public.

d. Prior approval.

(1) Payment for the replacement of a hearing aid less than four years old shall require prior approval except when the recipient is under 21 years of age. The department shall approve payment when the original hearing aid is lost or broken beyond repair or there is a significant change in the person's hearing that would require a different hearing aid. (Cross-reference 78.28(4) "a")

(2) Payment for a hearing aid costing more than \$650 shall require prior approval. The department shall approve payment for either of the following purposes (Cross-reference 78.28(4) "b"):

1. Educational purposes when the recipient is participating in primary or secondary education or in a postsecondary academic program leading to a degree and an in-office comparison of an analog aid and a digital aid matched (+/- 5dB) for gain and output shows a significant improvement in either speech recognition in quiet or speech recognition in noise or an in-office comparison of two aids, one of which is single channel, shows significantly improved audibility.

2. Vocational purposes when documentation submitted indicates the necessity, such as varying amounts of background noise in the work environment and a need to converse in order to do the job, and an in-office comparison of an analog aid and a digital aid matched (+/- 5dB) for gain and output shows a significant improvement in either speech recognition in quiet or speech recognition in noise or an in-office comparison of two aids, one of which is single channel, shows significantly improved audibility.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 249A.4.