

Hearing Aid for Child

April 12, 2006

XYZ Health Plan
500 Main Street, Suite 101
Washington, DC 20011

Re: Adam Wilson
Member ID#: 321654789
Member Name: Mary Wilson
Group Name: VWCY
Group ID#: 2500

Dear Claims Department:

On (add date), XYZ Health Plan denied coverage of a hearing aid for 7-year-old boy with a sensorineural hearing loss. This letter encourages you to reconsider this claim for payment. Federal law supports states in establishing infant hearing screening programs and many health plans, such as Trigon Blue Cross Blue Shield in Virginia are moving to add audiology and hearing aid benefits for young children. Maryland passed a law requiring health plan coverage for hearing aids for children, as have Connecticut, Kentucky, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

It is my hope that XYZ will recognize current standards of practice, which support legislative efforts, and include audiological services and hearing aids for young children.

Auditory evaluation and treatment including the selection and fitting of hearing aids are medically necessary services to treat sensorineural hearing loss. Determination of medical necessity must consider whether the service is essential and appropriate to the diagnosis and/or treatment of an illness or injury. A hearing aid is essential in treating Adam's sensorineural hearing loss (a permanent medical condition), just as a prosthesis would be necessary in treating a child with a missing hand or leg.

Research shows that 5 of 1,000 children have hearing loss, which affects speech, language, and cognition. Early identification of hearing loss and intervention reduces the consequences of hearing impairment. Children receiving early treatment are significantly better in the use of residual hearing, auditory development, and language competence.

Please reconsider coverage of a hearing aid to treat Adam's hearing loss, a medical condition.

Sincerely,

John A. Smith, PhD, CCC-A