



PAAC August/September 2021 Report

Sharing updates from Payer Advocacy Advisory Committee:

Highlights from our activities:

1. PAAC continues to engage with UnitedHealthcare regarding underpayment for COVID testing. If you have examples where your practice has submitted a signed contract amendment and you continue to be paid below CMS rates for testing, please submit a [Hassle Factor Form](#).
2. PAAC continues to engage with UnitedHealthcare regarding underpayment for COVID Immunization Administration codes. They report they are paying initially at the contract default rate for “new CPT codes” and then adjusting quarterly. The initial codes were adjusted July 1, 2021. If you are still not getting paid according to CMS rates (with the CMS rates being approximately \$40 with regional adjustments) by United Healthcare for COVID 19 Immunization Administration codes for claims after July 1, please submit a [Hassle Factor Form](#). The AAP is working diligently to ensure adequate payment as soon as the IA codes are released for the pediatric population.
3. PAAC continues to strategize with leadership about down-coding practices and to meet with payers who are implementing this pre-payment audit. PAAC has submitted to the AAP AMA representative a draft AMA resolution for consideration.
4. We have reached out to Cigna to obtain clarification regarding payment for COVID IA codes at the same time as routine vaccinations. If you have experienced any payer not paying fully for both routine IA codes and COVID IA codes, please submit a [Hassle Factor Form](#) so we can collect information and advocate appropriately.
5. We have heard for many months that practices and Pediatric Councils are having difficulty finding regional Aetna contacts with which to engage. We have a new national Aetna contact and will be discussing this with them, as well as underpayment for vaccines.
6. The AAP, in partnership with ACG, AGA, ASGE, & NASPGHAN, met with Aetna to discuss concerns with their policy for dosing restrictions of infliximab for patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease, considering the FDA-approved dose may not be adequate to achieve positive clinical outcomes. Aetna updated their infliximab precertification process to cover doses up to 10 mg/kg with appropriate documentation. Conversations are ongoing to further address this issue with dosing restrictions.

As part of PAAC monthly activities, we discussed a variety of subjects including:

1. Congratulations to PAAC member Gail Schonfeld whose 2 ALF resolutions were accepted at the leadership meeting:
[In the top 10](#) was Resolution #5: *Developing Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) Measures to Reflect all Aspects of Preventive Care According to Bright Futures*

Also on the consent calendar and Resolution #14 which was adopted: *Eliminating "Most Favored Nation" Clauses in Payer Contracts*

PAAC and COCHF (the Committee on Child Health Financing) will be working to advance these resolutions.

2. Upcoming Agenda for the PAAC/COCHF semi-annual meeting to be held in October.
3. Prioritizing issues raised by the Pediatric Councils including payment for COVID testing and down-coding practices.

The Academy will be placing a call for applications for PAAC positions (2 will open up July 2021 as well as the Chair position). Please reach out to Sue Kressly (skressly@kresslypediatrics.com) if you would like more information and consider applying!

Thank you for all that you do to help the children, families and colleagues of your region!

Request from PAAC: if you have any problems with payment, please reach out to us by filling out the [Hassle Factor Form](#) (link on the bottom of every SOAPM email), or emailing members directly. **PLEASE** consider including **email contact for your biller or office manager** who might best provide additional information so that we can be more effective in our advocacy efforts. In addition, if we reach out to you to follow-up, please respond and include the appropriate team members in your organization who might be able to provide additional details if needed.

Please help us help you!
Sue Kressly, PAAC Chair

Contacts:

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The "Blues":

Herschel Lessin kidmd@optonline.net (BCBS carriers in Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington DC, West Virginia) and

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Cigna: Sue Kressly, skressly@kresslypediatrics.com

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United Healthcare: chipharb@comcast.net

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All others....please process through the [Hassle Factor Form](#)

Thanks for your support!
Sue Kressly