



## June 2022 PAAC Report

This will serve as my final PAAC Report as Chair of the Payer Advocacy Advisory Committee. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work on behalf of all AAP Members both educating and advocating for appropriate payment so that every child has access to high quality, comprehensive, family-centered care. I couldn't ask for a better group of member leaders around the committee table. The PAAC members have brought passion, expertise and persistence to this critically important work. I leave this committee in the very capable hands of your incoming chair, Greg Barabell! His expertise and passion will continue to move the work forward.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Dr. Gail Schonfeld and Dr. Chip Harbaugh for their six years of service to PAAC. Their contributions are too numerous to mention and on behalf of the AAP Membership at large: THANK YOU! Thank you for your willingness to show up, to speak up, and to share your voices and lead. The work continues, but your efforts have paved the way for continued success.

I also want to take the opportunity to publicly thank Teresa Salaway, our PAAC AAP Staff who in the 13 months or so she has been with the Academy, has proven to be the invaluable PAAC infrastructure. She is the expert behind the scenes taking your Hassle Factor forms and investigating what's happening. She is the person who follows up with payers to make sure they don't forget to close the loop. She is the person arranging meetings, emails, calls and coordinating the passionate PAAC crew. Teresa: THANK YOU for all you have done. It was an incredible experience and opportunity to work with you.

PAAC welcomes three new committee members: Drs Christoph Diasio, Shannon Fox-Levine, and George Rogu!

Sharing updates from the Payer Advocacy Advisory Committee:

1. Members have reported issues with payment for vaccine administration with multiple payers:
  - a. Cigna was denying claims for vaccine administration (90461, 90472-90474) for various reasons, such as "add-on code cannot be billed by itself" or "disallowed because the related primary service was either not billed or denied." Cigna has identified this issue and put a fix into place. Remediation of impacted claims has begun, and providers do not need to take any action.
  - b. We have also heard of Aetna denying vaccine administration or significantly reduced payments for vaccine administration. Note that Aetna accepts the -25 modifier on the E/M or the -59 modifier on the admin code. If you've used either of these modifiers and are still seeing denials for vaccine administration, please report through [the Coding Hotline/Hassle Factor Form](#). PAAC is looking into this issue.
  - c. Highmark is denying claims for vaccine administration when used with Z23. Please report any other instances of denials for vaccine administration to [the Coding Hotline/Hassle Factor Form](#).
2. Recently, Cigna announced a new policy planned to be effective in August that will impact evaluation and management (E/M) codes (99212-99215) and modifier 25 when billed with a

minor procedure. PAAC is aware and in contact with Cigna. If you receive any communication from Cigna about changes to this policy, please report through [the Coding Hotline/Hassle Factor Form](#)

3. PAAC has heard of UHC denying VAXELIS™ due to incorrect NDC code. PAAC is looking into this issue with UHC and will communicate any updates.
4. Some members have reported clearinghouses and payers denying the COVID immunization administration codes for children ages 6 months up to 5 years. Please send more information to the Coding Hotline/Hassle Factor Form if you are experiencing this.
5. PAAC tries to review national payer update newsletters on policy changes that impact pediatrics. Please bring any concerning payer policy updates to our attention!
6. The next Pediatric Council meeting is scheduled for July 13. Please contact [tsalaway@aap.org](mailto:tsalaway@aap.org) for more information.

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, coverage, or payer policies, please reach out to us via [the Coding Hotline/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

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All others please process through [the Coding Hotline/Hassle Factor Form](#)

Thanks for your support!