

Reimbursement for early elective deliveries

Summary of update: To improve birth outcomes for our members and further reduce early elective deliveries (EEDs), effective **July 1, 2020**, Wellpoint will require a Z3A diagnosis code indicating the gestational age on all professional delivery claims with supporting medical necessity diagnosis codes for EEDs. Wellpoint will apply *MCG Care Guidelines*, which define medically necessary criteria for EEDs.

Background

The collaborative efforts of Wellpoint, state Medicaid agencies, the March of Dimes, CMS, the Joint Commission, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and many others contributed to improvements in EED rates across the country. They have encouraged discussion between patients, care providers and hospitals. Hospital hard-stop policies describing the review of clinical indication and scheduling approval for EEDs also increased awareness of the harm that can be caused by non-medically necessary EEDs. Additionally, voluntary efforts combined with payment reform have been found to further decrease EED rates while increasing gestational age and birth weight for the covered population.*

What is the impact of this change?

All professional delivery claims (59400, 59409, 59410, 59510, 59514, 59515, 59525, 59610, 59612, 59614, 59618, 59620 and 59622) with dates of service July 1, 2020, or after will require a Z3A code indicating the gestational age at the time of delivery. If the code is not on the claim, we will deny the claim with the explanation code e02 — *Delivery diagnoses incomplete without report of pregnancy weeks of gestation*. You may resubmit the claim with the appropriate Z3A code.

Professional delivery claims with dates of service on or after July 1, 2020, with gestational ages prior to 39 weeks will require a supporting medically necessary diagnosis code for the early delivery. If a professional delivery claim is submitted without evidence of medical necessity, it will deny with the explanation code k34 — *Delivery is not medically indicated*.

You may resubmit the claim with the appropriate supporting diagnosis code or submit an appeal with the relevant medical records. For more information on the appeal process, refer to the provider manual located on the provider website at provider.wellpoint.com/nj/.

What if I need assistance?

If you have questions, received this communication in error or need assistance with any other item, contact your local Provider Relationship Management representative or call Provider Services at **833-731-2149**.

* Dahlen, H. M., et al. (2017). Texas Medicaid Payment Reform: Fewer Early Elective Deliveries and Increased Gestational Age and Birthweight. *Health Affairs*, 36 (3), 460-467.