

Pre-Certification Guidelines for Acute Level of Care Christian Science Nursing Facility/RNHCI

Description of policy

This document addresses pre-certification/pre-authorization for inpatient acute care services provided to health plan enrollees by Christian Science nursing facilities, including those that participate in the Medicare program as Religious Nonmedical Health Care Institution (RNHCIs). Under the Medicare program, the RNHCI benefit is available to patients who elect care in a Christian Science nursing facility based on their sincerely held religious beliefs and require the equivalent of inpatient acute hospital level of care and related services due to their health condition. The facility or program must be Medicare certified as a RNHCI or otherwise authorized or permitted to operate pursuant to the laws of the state in which it is situated, to provide services to patients needing this level of care.

MCG (Milliman Care Guidelines) should not be utilized when determining coverage for a patient admitted to a Christian Science nursing facility because MCG was established for patients in conventional medical facilities. By definition, Christian Science nursing facility services are provided to individuals who choose not to utilize traditional medical services due to their religious beliefs. *Journal*-listed Christian Science nursing care is essential because these patients are experiencing acute health problems and have chosen to receive Christian Science nursing facility care rather than any form of medical monitoring, intervention, or treatment.

For Pre-Certification requests, admission for determination of level of care is permitted. Under Medicare law, patients choosing RNHCI services as a result of their religious beliefs are not required to have a primary care physician diagnosis or emergency room recommendation to submit for Pre-Certification. While RNHCIs may report a medical diagnosis on a UB04 claim (if the patient received prior medical care before admission), most RNHCI patients at an acute level of care do not have a medical diagnosis. ICD coding for RNHCI providers is limited by CMS to two codes, as these providers do not diagnose diseases.

Appendix A is used for Pre-Certification for Acute Level of Care in Christian Science Nursing Facility (RNHCI).

The following policy applies to Pre-Certification of acute level of Christian Science nursing care.

Clinical Indications

Clinical Indications for Admission to Inpatient Acute Care at a Christian Science Nursing Facility

Certification of Christian Science nursing facility services for a patient with acute needs is based on **ALL** of the following criteria in Tier 1 being met **and** two or more of the criteria in Tier 2 being met:

Tier 1:

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1. Evaluation and care plan development in an accredited Christian Science nursing facility during a 24 hour period for a patient with urgent and multiple care needs; **and**
2. Patient requires extensive use of high level Christian Science nursing resources in 24 hours; **and**
3. Patient requires at least 300 minutes of direct care daily by *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s); **and**
4. Only *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) are qualified to manage the patient's multiple care needs.

Tier 2--Two criteria must be met:

1. Full bed care; **OR,**
2. Complex transfers, toileting and/or positioning requiring specialized training of *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) to prevent pain or further injury; **OR**
3. Extensive care provided to a patient with an obstructed airway or requiring acute care to assure sufficient air intake; **OR**
4. Extensive cleansing and bandaging of wound(s) several times daily; **OR**
5. Patient whose behavior presents a significant risk of injury to self or others.

Coding	
Type of Bill Code	041x
Revenue Code	0120
ICD-10 Diagnosis	For dates of service on or after 10/01/2015 Principal diagnosis - R69; other diagnosis - Z53.1
ICD-9 Diagnosis	For dates of service prior to 10/01/2015 799.89 Other ill-defined conditions

Discussion/General Information

A *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse is a Christian Science nurse who has received training and been recognized as demonstrating the skills, judgment, and practical wisdom necessary and qualified to represent herself or himself to the public as meeting all aspects of the Church bylaw for the Christian Science nurse as provided in the constitutional governing document of this religious denomination (Art. IX, § 31, *Manual of The Mother Church*). *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurses provide direct care, as well as oversight, evaluation and management of a patient's care plans on a 24-7 basis, including careful supervision and monitoring, of their specific health needs and response to significant and/or sudden changes in condition.

An accredited Christian Science nursing facility provides acute care and related services to individuals who require specific highly skilled and extensive practical skills and judgments (including assessment, evaluation, and management of the care plan) due to their acute or unstable health conditions in an inpatient setting. The care provided is similar to a hospital except that no medical technology, interventions, treatments, or medications are used in accordance with the patient's decision to rely on a religious nonmedical method of healing. The facility or program must be accredited by The

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Commission for Accreditation of Christian Science Nursing Organizations/Facilities, Inc. and otherwise authorized, pursuant to the laws of the state in which it is situated to operate and provide the Christian Science nursing services.

Appendix A – Pre-Certification for Acute Level of Care in Christian Science Nursing Facility (RNHCI) – Patient Submission Form

References

Government Agency, Medical Society, Health Plan and Other Authoritative Publications:

1. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Skilled Nursing Facility Manual. Revised September 2005. Available at: <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/index.html?redirect=/Manuals/PBM/list.asp>. Accessed on June 21, 2015.
2. Anthem Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation, Clinical Guideline (CG-REHAB-09) https://www.anthem.com/medicalpolicies/guidelines/gl_pw_a051177.htm
3. Anthem Inpatient Subacute Care, Utilization Management, Clinical Guideline (CG-MED-31) https://www.anthem.com/medicalpolicies/guidelines/gl_pw_a057021.htm
4. 42 U.S.C. § 1395i-5(a)
5. 42 U.S.C. § 1395x(ss)(3)