

## **Pre-Certification Guidelines for Skilled Christian Science Nursing Levels of Care Christian Science Nursing Facility/RNHCI**

### **Description of policy**

This document addresses pre-certification/pre-authorization for inpatient skilled Christian Science nursing services provided to health plan enrollees by Christian Science nursing facilities, including those that participate in the Medicare program as Religious Nonmedical Health Care Institutions (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 skilled nursing facility (SNF) level of care and related services. 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 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 experience serious health problems requiring skilled Christian Science nursing 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 an UB04 claim (if the patient received prior medical care before admission), most RNHCI patients at a skilled Christian Science nursing 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 Inpatient Skilled Christian Science Nursing Facility (RNHCI).**

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

### **Clinical Indications**

#### **Clinical Indications for Admission to Inpatient Skilled Christian Science Nursing at a RNHCI**

For skilled Christian Science nursing facility services to be appropriate at Subacute Level IV (Revenue code 0194), Subacute Level III (Revenue code 0193), Subacute Level II (Revenue code 0192), or Subacute Level I (Revenue Code 0191) ALL of the criteria in Tier 1 are met and one or more of the criteria in Tier 2 are met and the criteria for each Level of Care must also be met:

#### ***Tier 1:***

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1. The individual requires skilled Christian Science nursing services that must be performed by, or under the supervision of *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s); **and**
2. The individual requires these skilled Christian Science nursing services on a **daily** basis; **and**
3. As a practical matter, the daily skilled Christian Science nursing services can be provided only on an inpatient basis in an inpatient Christian Science nursing facility providing skilled Christian Science nursing; **and**
4. Skilled Christian Science nursing services must be reasonable and necessary for the improvement or amelioration of or prevention of deterioration in an individual's illness or injury (that is, be consistent with the nature and severity of the individual's illness or injury, his particular health needs); **and**
5. Initial admission and subsequent stay in a Christian Science nursing facility for skilled Christian Science nursing services must include development, management, monitoring, and evaluation of a plan of care as follows:
  - a. The involvement of skilled Christian Science nursing personnel is required to meet the individual's physical and/or mental health needs, promote recovery and ensure safety (in terms of the individual's physical or mental condition); **and**
  - b. There must be a significant probability that complications and/or deterioration of condition would arise without skilled supervision of the care plan by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse; **and**
  - c. Care plans must include realistic, measurable Christian Science nursing goals and objectives for the individual, discharge plans and the planned interventions by the Christian Science nursing staff to meet those goals and objectives; **and**
  - d. Updated care plans must document the outcome of the planned interventions; **and**
6. There must be daily documentation of the individual's progress or complications.

**At least one** of the following elements in Tier 2 must be met to qualify as skilled Christian Science nursing facility services:

### **Tier 2:**

1. Observation, assessment and monitoring of a complicated or unstable condition:
  - a. A complex or unstable condition of the individual must require the skills of *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse or nurses in order to identify and evaluate the individual's need for possible intervention and/or modification of the care plan; **and**
  - b. Daily Christian Science nursing notes must give evidence of the individual's condition, implementation of the care plan, and documentation must indicate the results of monitoring.

**OR**
2. Complex teaching services to the patient or caregiver requiring 24 hour inpatient Christian Science nursing facility setting vs. intermittent home health care setting; the teaching itself is a skilled service.

**OR**
3. Extensive care provided to a patient with an obstructed airway or requiring acute care to assure sufficient air intake;

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**OR**

4. Cleansing and bandaging of wound(s) several times daily;

**OR**

5. Patient whose mental condition and/or behavior presents a risk of significant harm to self or others.

In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 criteria, to qualify for skilled Christian Science nursing facility services **at Subacute Level IV (Revenue code 0194) the following must be met:**

1. Patient has two (2) or more health problems that require direct care delivered by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) for at least seven hundred twenty (720) minutes within a seven (7) day period; **and**
2. *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) must provide at least a minimum of five (5) days of this care for one category of health problem and at least three (3) days of care must be provided for a separate category of health problem.

In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 criteria, to qualify for Skilled Christian Science nursing facility services **at Subacute Level III (Revenue code 0193) the following must be met:**

1. The patient has two (2) or more health problems that require a minimum of five-hundred (500) minutes, within a seven (7) day period, delivered by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse or nurses; **and**
2. *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) must provide at least a minimum of five (5) days for one category of health problem within any seven (7) day facility stay.

In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 criteria, to qualify for Skilled Christian Science nursing facility services **at Subacute Level II (Revenue code 0192) the following must be met:**

1. The patient has two (2) or more health problems that require the patient's care delivered by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) for a minimum of three-hundred twenty-five (325) minutes of care, within a seven (7) day period.
2. *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) must provide a minimum of three hundred twenty-five (325) minutes of care within five (5) days of any seven (7) days in the facility.

In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 criteria, to qualify for Skilled Christian Science nursing facility services **at Subacute Level I (Revenue code 0191) the following must be met:**

1. The patient has one or more health problems that require intermittent management by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse or nurses.
2. *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) deliver at least one hundred fifty (150) minutes of patient's care, within a seven (7) day period.
3. *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse(s) must provide the minimum of one hundred fifty (150) minutes within five (5) days of any seven (7) days in the facility.

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<b>Coding</b>	
<b>Type of Bill Code</b>	041x
<b>Revenue Code</b>	0194, 0193, 0192, 0191
<b>ICD-10 Diagnosis</b>	<b>For dates of service on or after 10/01/2015</b> Principal diagnosis - R69; other diagnosis - Z53.1
<b>ICD-9 Diagnosis</b>	<b>For dates of service prior to 10/01/2015 799.89</b>

### 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. At the skilled Christian Science nursing facility level, services must be provided directly by or under the general supervision of *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurses to assure the safety of the individual and to achieve improved health outcomes.

An accredited Christian Science nursing facility provides skilled Christian Science nursing 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 health conditions in an inpatient setting. The care provided is similar to a skilled nursing facility (SNF) 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 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 Inpatient Skilled 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 Skilled Nursing Facilities Services, Utilization Management, Clinical Guideline (CG-MED-31) [https://www.anthem.com/medicalpolicies/guidelines/gl\\_pw\\_a057021.htm](https://www.anthem.com/medicalpolicies/guidelines/gl_pw_a057021.htm)

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3. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Criteria for skilled services and the need for skilled services. 42 CFR § 409.32.
4. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Examples of skilled nursing and rehabilitation services. 42 CFR § 409.33.
5. 42 U.S.C. § 1395i-5(a)
6. 42 U.S.C. § 1395x(ss)(3)