



Provider Announcement: Partial Reinstatement of Optometry Benefits

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) **reinstated optometry services as a covered benefit** for all Medi-Cal Members, effective July 26, 2010, retroactive back to the date of the benefit elimination. CenCal Health is following suit. This means that optometry services, including diagnostic, ancillary and supplemental procedures used for the evaluation of the visual system, are once again a covered benefit for all CenCal Health Santa Barbara Health Initiative (SBHI) and San Luis Obispo Health Initiative (SLOHI) Members. Optician services, including eye glasses, eye appliances, and related services such as eyeglass fittings **remain an eliminated optional benefit.**

Both member groups and services may, in certain circumstances, be termed 'exempt' from the eyeglass and eye appliance optional benefit exclusion. Members in the following categories **are eligible** for eyeglasses, eye appliances, and related services in addition to optometry services.

1. Members 20 years old and under.
2. Members residing in a skilled nursing facility, i.e., Nursing Facilities Level A [NF-A] and Level B [NF-B]) or intermediate care facility for the developmentally disabled (ICF-DD or ICF-DDH). Services do not need to be physically provided in the nursing facility to be covered. Members identified by an Aid Code of 13, 23, 53 or 63 when checking eligibility.

In addition the following **services are not impacted** and are still covered benefits:

1. Services authorized by the California Children's Services (CCS) Program.
2. Crossover claims for Members also covered by Medicare. If the service is unable to be billed to Medicare, i.e., Medicare non-covered items, then the service will not be covered by CenCal Health.
3. Bandaged contact lenses, HCPCS code V2599.

The reinstatement of optometry services as a covered benefit is retroactive back to the date of the benefit elimination, January 1, 2010 for SBHI and SLOHI Members. CenCal Health will reprocess all denied claims for the reinstated optometry services with dates of service between January 1, 2010 and July 25, 2010, and pay clean claims that were denied because of the benefit elimination.

Please see the [Protocols for Optometry](#) and the [Protocols for Opticians](#) in the Provider Manual section of our website (www.cencalhealth.org) for additional information. If you have any questions please contact the Provider Services Department and speak with your Provider Services Representative, Ashley Erickson at 805.562.1675 for Central and Southern Santa Barbara County providers, Tess Limjoco at 805.562.1679 for Santa Maria providers, or Molly D'Ambrosio at 805.541.7081 for San Luis Obispo County providers. We hope this notice is good news for your practice and apologize for the confusion incurred by the Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS) optional benefit elimination policy revision. As always, thank you for the service that you provide to our members.