

Humidifiers, Heating Elements, Compressors, and Large Volume Nebulizers Benefit Criteria to Change Effective March 1, 2017

Overview of Benefit Changes

- Humidification and heated humidification systems may be considered for rental or purchase with prior authorization (Fee-For-Service) and documentation of medical necessity.
- Large volume nebulizer jars used with other respiratory equipment, such as compressors, may be a benefit when medically necessary and may be considered for purchase without prior authorization.
- Compressors and some humidification supplies may be considered for purchase with prior authorization (Fee-For-Service) and documentation of specific medical criteria outlined below.
- Providers are encouraged to read the rental and purchase limitations for this equipment outlined in "Covered Procedure Codes and Benefit Limitations" table which can be found in the article "Benefit Criteria to Change for Respiratory Equipment and Supplies Effective March 1, 2017" article.

Humidification Therapy and Heating Elements

Humidification involves adding water vapor and sometimes heat to the inspired gas. Humidification therapy and heating elements are provided using the following procedure codes:

Procedure Codes					
Large Volume nebulizer jar (water jar)					
A7007	A7017	E0575	E0580		
Humidifiers					
E0550	E0561	E0562			
Other Supplies					
E0565	E1372	E0585			

Humidification therapy and heating elements may be considered for rental or purchase with prior authorization (Fee-For-Service) and documentation of medical necessity.

Heating Elements

Heated humidifiers (procedure codes E0562) and heated nebulizers (procedure code E0585) are used for clients with bypassed upper airways, clients receiving mechanical ventilator support, and those with high flow positive airway pressure devices.

If heat is required for use with a large volume nebulizer (LVN), an immersion element (procedure code E1372), can be added.

Providers should refer to the "Benefit Criteria to Change for Respiratory Equipment and Supplies" article for additional information about the purchase and rental options for heating elements.

Indications of Need for Humidifiers, Humidification Systems, and Heating Elements

Indications for humidification and warming of inspired gases are:

- Humidifying dry medical gases
- Overcoming humidity deficit created when upper airway is bypassed

Clinical signs and symptoms that may be an indication that airway humidification is medically necessary include:

- Dry, nonproductive cough
- Increased airway resistance
- Increased incidence of infection
- Increased work of breathing
- Complaint of substernal pain and airway dryness
- Thick, dehydrated secretions

Prior Authorization Requirements for Humidifiers, Humidification Systems, and Heating Elements (Fee-For-Service)

To obtain prior authorization for monthly rental or purchase of humidification therapy or heating elements all of the following documentation must be submitted in addition to the [Home Health Services \(Title XIX\) DME/Medical Supplies Physician Order](#) form:

- Evidence that the client has a tracheostomy or tracheobronchial stent
- Evidence that the client has thick tenacious secretions not responsive to normal levels of humidification provided with routine humidifiers used with regulators or flow meters
- Evidence that the client is not currently renting a ventilator
- Evidence that the client is not currently renting a compressor for the delivery of humidification

Providers must specify the site of room air or oxygen delivery (e.g., nose or mouth, hypopharynx, trachea) and state how much heat and humidity is needed to mitigate the cold, dry gas delivered through the site.

Prior Authorization Requirements for Compressors and Large Volume Nebulizer Jars (Water Jars) (Fee-For-Service)

To obtain prior authorization for monthly rental or purchase of compressors and large volume nebulizer jars a [Home Health Services \(Title XIX\) DME/Medical Supplies Physician Order](#) form must be submitted.

A large volume ultrasonic nebulizer (procedure codes E0575), and a nebulizer with compressor and heater (procedure code E0585) may be considered for purchase with prior authorization when the following criteria are met:

- The client has thick, tenacious secretions.
- The client has one of the following medical conditions:
 - Cystic fibrosis
 - Bronchiectasis
 - A tracheostomy
 - A tracheobronchial stent

The compressor (procedure code E0565) may be considered when all of the following criteria are met:

- The compressor is needed for the administration of pentamidine using a filtered nebulizer.
- The client has one of the following medical conditions:
 - HIV with pulmonary complications
 - Pneumocystosis
 - Complications of organ transplants

Providers may refer to the “Covered Procedure Codes and Benefit Limitations” table in the article titled “Benefit Criteria to Change for Respiratory Equipment and Supplies Effective March 1, 2017,” for additional details for each procedure code. These details include maximum quantity limitations, rental versus purchase options, and prior authorization requirements.