

## Speech Generating Devices (SGD)

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### IMPORTANT REMINDER

*The Medicare Advantage Medical Policy manual is not intended to override the member Evidence of Coverage (EOC), which defines the insured's benefits, nor is it intended to dictate how providers are to practice medicine. Physicians and other health care providers are expected to exercise their medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care for the individual member.*

*The Medicare Advantage Medical Policies are designed to provide guidance regarding the decision-making process for the coverage or non-coverage of services or procedures in accordance with the member EOC and the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) policies, when available. In the event of a conflict, applicable CMS policy or EOC language will take precedence over the Medicare Advantage Medical Policy. In the absence of CMS guidance for a requested service or procedure, the health plan may apply their Medical Policy Manual or MCG™ criteria, both of which are developed with an objective, evidence-based process using scientific evidence, current generally accepted standards of medical practice, and authoritative clinical practice guidelines.*

*Medicare and EOCs exclude from coverage, among other things, services or procedures considered to be investigational, cosmetic, or not medically necessary, and in some cases, providers may bill members for these non-covered services or procedures. Providers are encouraged to inform members in advance when they may be financially responsible for the cost of non-covered or excluded services.*

## DESCRIPTION

Augmentative communication devices and systems (ACD) are also known as augmentative and alternative communication devices (ACC), and speech generating devices (SGD). “Speech generating devices are defined as durable medical equipment that provides an individual who has a severe speech impairment with the ability to meet his or her functional, speaking needs. Speech generating devices are speech aids consisting of devices or software that generate speech and are used solely by the individual who has a severe speech impairment. The speech is generated using one of the following methods:

- digitized audible/verbal speech output, using prerecorded messages;
- synthesized audible/verbal speech output which requires message formulation by spelling and device access by physical contact with the device-direct selection techniques;
- synthesized audible/verbal speech output which permits multiple methods of message formulation and multiple methods of device access; or
- software that allows a computer or other electronic device to generate audible/verbal speech.” (*National Coverage Determination 50.1*)

## MEDICARE ADVANTAGE POLICY CRITERIA

<b>CMS Coverage Manuals*</b>	None
<b>National Coverage Determinations (NCDs)*</b>	See References <sup>[1]</sup>  NCD only provides definitions of SGDs and examples of devices that would not be characterized as SGDs. It also states, “Medicare Administrative Contractors acting within their respective jurisdictions have discretion to cover or not cover speech generating devices based on their individual reasonable and necessary determinations.” Therefore, coverage decisions for SGDs will be made using criteria developed by the Medicare contractor, Noridian Healthcare Solutions (Noridian).
<b>Noridian Healthcare Solutions (Noridian) Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) and Articles (LCAs)*</b>	Speech Generating Devices ( <a href="#">L33739</a> )  **Scroll to the “Public Version(s)” section at the bottom of the LCD for links to prior versions if necessary.

## POLICY GUIDELINES

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The information below **must** be submitted for review to determine whether policy criteria are met. If any of these items are not submitted, it could impact our review and decision outcome:

- Medical records must document all of the following:
  - Current communication impairment, including the type, severity, language skills, cognitive ability, and anticipated course of the impairment;
  - An assessment of whether the individual's daily communication needs could be met using other natural modes of communication;
  - A description of the functional communication goals expected to be achieved and treatment options (including how the beneficiary's speech impairment will benefit from the device ordered).
  - Rationale for selection of a specific device and any accessories (other forms of treatment must be considered and ruled out);
  - Demonstration that the beneficiary possesses a treatment plan that includes a training schedule for the selected device, as well as the cognitive and physical abilities to effectively use the selected device and any necessary accessories to communicate;

- For an upgrade request, information regarding the functional benefit to the beneficiary of the upgrade compared to the initially provided SGD.

## CROSS REFERENCES

None

## REFERENCES

1. NCD for Speech Generating Devices ([50.1](#))
2. Speech Generating Devices (SGD) - Policy Article ([A52469](#))

## CODING

Codes	Number	Description
<b>CPT</b>	None	
<b>HCPCS</b>	E2500	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, less than or equal to 8 minutes recording time
	E2502	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, greater than 8 minutes but less than or equal to 20 minutes recording time
	E2504	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, greater than 20 minutes but less than or equal to 40 minutes recording time
	E2506	Speech generating device, digitized speech, using pre-recorded messages, greater than 40 minutes recording time
	E2508	Speech generating device, synthesized speech, requiring message formulation by spelling and access by physical contact with the device
	E2510	Speech generating device, synthesized speech, permitting multiple methods of message formulation and multiple methods of device access
	E2511	Speech generating software program, for personal computer or personal digital assistant
	E2512	Accessory for speech generating device, mounting system
	E2599	Accessory for speech generating device, not otherwise classified

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** Medicare Advantage medical policies use the most current Medicare references available at the time the policy was developed. Links to Medicare references will take viewers to external websites outside of the health plan's web control as these sites are not maintained by the health plan.