



GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

June 16, 2020

RULING LETTER NO. CN-2020-279-D

TO ALL HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS AND HEALTH INSURERS AUTHORIZED TO WRITE COMMERCIAL HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS IN PUERTO RICO

Re: Coverage of Personal Protection Equipment for Dental Services in Commercial Health Insurance Plans

Dear Sirs and Madams:

In view of the public health emergency caused by the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), the Government of Puerto Rico has taken unprecedented action directed at minimizing and controlling the propagation of this virus for the protection of the health and lives of the entire population. Given this reality, it is essential that the necessary measures be implemented to guarantee timely and adequate access of the population to health services.

In the area of dental health, it is of fundamental importance to ensure that patients may reinitiate in an appropriate and safe manner the dental care that was not possible to receive because of the closure of dental offices due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has acknowledged that dental practice entails particular risks of infection that require the implementation of new safety protocols, the use of personal protection equipment, and additional disinfection protocols for dental instruments, to protect patients and dental health practitioners from contagion. This means that there is a new approach to safety to control of infection in the provision of dental services. Please refer to the CDC guidelines for dental practice, "Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Dental Settings During the COVID-19 Response".¹

In response to the extraordinary circumstances faced by dentists in view of COVID-19, the American Dental Association (ADA) published the D1999 code - "unspecified preventive procedure", as the uniform code at the national level of the United States for billing expenses that are inherent to dental practice for personal protection equipment (PPE). Since the use of personal protection equipment (PPE) is essential for the safety of the patient in providing dental services, insurers and health services organizations are hereby required to include the D1999 code in the dental coverage of commercial health insurance plans.

¹ Accessible at the following internet address: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>



The D1999 code shall be billed by dentists who have an active contract with an insurer or health services organization, along with the dental procedure or procedures performed every day and that are part of the patient's coverage, after an in person visit to any dental office. The insurer or health services organization shall establish and notify the participating dentists of the rate for this code, which shall not be less than \$35.00 dollars per in person visit to the dental office.

Invoicing with this code shall be effective as of the date of approval of this ruling letter and will remain in effect until the state of emergency ends or the OCI notifies the suspension of such effect, whichever occurs first.

Strict compliance with the provisions of this letter is hereby required. Failure to comply with the aforementioned provisions will entail the imposition of sanctions.

Very truly yours,

Rafael Cestero-Lopategui, Esq. CIC
Chief Deputy Commissioner