
Acupuncture Services Payment Policy

Policy Statement

Acupuncture is the technique of inserting thin needles through the skin at specific points in the body to control pain and other symptoms.

Acupuncture will be covered when performed by a provider who has successfully completed a course that has been approved by the American Board of Medical Acupuncture (ABMA) and meets the Rhode Island Department of Health's requirements for licensure as a doctor of acupuncture set forth in the Rules and Regulations for Licensing Doctors of Acupuncture and Acupuncture Assistants.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Medicaid** *excluding Extended Family Planning (EFP)*
- INTEGRITY**
- Commercial**

Prerequisites

All services must be medically necessary to qualify for reimbursement. Neighborhood may use the following criteria to determine medical necessity:

- National Coverage Determination (NCD)
- Local Coverage Determination (LCD)
- Industry accepted criteria such as InterQual
- Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) recommendations
- Clinical Medical Policies (CMP)

It is the provider's responsibility to verify eligibility, coverage and authorization criteria prior to rendering services.

For more information please refer to:

- Neighborhood's plan specific [Prior Authorization Reference page](#).
- Neighborhood's [Clinical Medical Policies](#).

Please contact Provider Services at 1-800-963-1001 for questions related to this policy.

Coverage Limitations

Treatment is based on medical review, and is limited to 12 visits per plan year.

Acupuncture is covered for the following diagnoses only:

- Chronic low back pain



- Fibromyalgia
- Chronic migraine

Coverage Exclusions

- Adjunctive therapy including but not limited to herbs, oriental massage, moxibustion, cupping
- Acupuncture as an anesthetic during a surgical procedure
- Acupuncture in lieu of anesthesia
- Use of precious metal needles (e.g. gold, silver needles)
- Acupuncture assistants will not be separately reimbursed
- Acupuncture is limited to office settings and is not covered when performed in the home, nursing, residential, domiciliary, or custodial facilities
- Any other service not specifically listed as covered

Claim Submission

Billable services are subject to contractual agreements, when applicable. Providers are required to submit complete claims for payment within contractually determined timely filing guidelines.

Coding must meet standards defined by the American Medical Association’s Current Procedural Terminology Editorial Panel’s (CPT®) codebook, the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM), and the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Level II.

Documentation Requirements

Neighborhood reserves the right to request medical records for any service billed. Documentation in the medical record must support the service(s) billed as well as the medical necessity of the service(s). Neighborhood follows CMS standards for proper documentation requirements.

Member Responsibility

Commercial plans include cost sharing provisions for coinsurance, copays, and deductibles. Members may have out of pocket expenses based on individual plan selection and utilization. Please review cost sharing obligations or contact Member Services prior to finalizing member charges.

Coding

The inclusion of a code in this policy does not guarantee coverage or reimbursement.

Table 1: Below are the approved codes for licensed Acupuncturists:

CPT Code	Description
97810	Acupuncture, 1 or more needles; without electrical stimulation, initial 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient

CPT Code	Description
97811	Acupuncture, 1 or more needles; without electrical stimulation, each additional 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient, with re-insertion of needle(s) (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
97813	Acupuncture, 1 or more needles; with electrical stimulation, initial 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient
97814	Acupuncture, 1 or more needles; with electrical stimulation, each additional 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient, with re-insertion of needle(s) (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)

Disclaimer

This payment policy is informational only and is not intended to address every situation related to reimbursement for healthcare services; therefore, it is not a guarantee of reimbursement.

Claim payments are subject to the following, which include but are not limited to: Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island benefit coverage, member eligibility, claims payment edit rules, coding and documentation guidelines, authorization policies, provider contract agreements, and state and federal regulations. References to CPT or other sources are for definitional purposes only.

This policy may not be implemented exactly the same way on the different electronic claims processing systems used by Neighborhood due to programming or other constraints; however, Neighborhood strives to minimize these variations.

The information in this policy is accurate and current as of the date of publication; however, medical practices, technology, and knowledge are constantly changing. Neighborhood reserves the right to update this payment policy at any time. All services billed to Neighborhood for reimbursement are subject to audit.

Document History

Date	Action
12/11/24	Added exclusion language
07/01/24	Annual Review Date. No content changes.
03/29/23	Annual Review Date. No content changes.
02/01/22	Policy Effective
11/30/21	Policy Review
11/09/21	Policy Created