

**MEDICAL ASSOCIATES HEALTH PLANS
HEALTH CARE SERVICES POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL
POLICY NUMBER: PP 14**

POLICY TITLE: COCHLEAR IMPLANTS/OSSEOINTEGRATING AUDITORY DEVICE/HEARING AID DEVICES

POLICY PURPOSE: Provide consistent criteria when determining coverage for cochlear implants and osseointegrating auditory device for Health Plans' members.

DEFINITIONS:

- Cochlear implant is a device that electronically stimulates the auditory nerve of profoundly or totally deaf patients to provide a perception of sound. Sensorineural hearing loss or a damaged cochlea.
- Osseointegrating auditory device - improves acuity in individuals with moderate to severe conductive, mixed hearing loss, or bilateral loss.

PROCEDURE:

Cochlear implants unilateral or bilateral are considered **medically necessary** in patients 1 year and older with sensorineural hearing loss.

A cochlear implant consists of the following: external component that is worn by or carried by the member to capture and amplify sound and a surgically implanted part in the lumen of the cochlea.

Upgrading of an existing, functioning external system to achieve aesthetic improvement, such as smaller profile components or a switch from a body worn, external sound processor to a behind the ear model, are considered **not medically necessary**.

Osseointegrating auditory device: is considered **medically necessary** for patients with conductive hearing loss.

Osseointegrating auditory device consists of a titanium screw implanted into the skull which allows removable coupling of the sound processor to the bone.

Examples of reasons for use of an osseointegrating auditory device:

- Congenital or surgically-induced malformations of the external ear or middle ear
- Tumors of the external ear
- Tumors of the tympanic cavity
- Otosclerosis in patients who are not suitable candidates for stapedectomy
- Severe chronic otitis externa or otitis media
- Dermatitis of the external ear, including hypersensitivity reactions to the ear molds used in conduction hearing aids

Auditory osseointegrated implants are considered **not medically necessary** for other indications including, but not limited to, bilateral sensorineural hearing loss.

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Medicare Members:

Note: Medicare consider BAHA's as a prosthetic device
Certain devices that produce perception of sound by replacing the function of the middle ear, cochlea or auditory nerve are payable by Medicare as prosthetic devices. These devices are indicated only when hearing aids are medically inappropriate or cannot be utilized due to congenital malformations, chronic disease, severe sensorineural hearing loss or surgery.

Osseointegrated implants, i.e., devices implanted in the skull that replace the function of the middle ear and provide mechanical energy to the cochlea via a mechanical transducer.

Hearing Aids – Wisconsin Mandate for members employed in Wisconsin. Affects children 18 year of age or less.

- a. Prior auth required to ensure that the prescribed device is medically necessary to meet the basic needs and required documentation of hearing aid type and reason for dispensing.
- b. Services covered include:
 1. Device
 2. Fitting
 3. Molds
 4. Shipping
- c. NOT included are batteries and ear plugs
- d. Enter auth using an OC in field 4 to indicate to claims to read the remarks or review benefits for partial payment auth.
- e. Hearing aid can be replaced every three (3) years; however this replacement will need to be justified for payment to occur.
- f. Check division remarks for coverage or intranet on schedule of benefits. This benefit is effective as groups renew.

Judy Riniker, R.N.
Manager of Health Care Services/Quality Improvement

Date

Mary Leary, R.N.
Director of Health Care Services/Quality Improvement

Date

Original: 09/08 Revised: 07/09 Revised: 11/10 Reviewed: 01/12
Reviewed: 03/09 Revised: 04/10 Revised: 02/11

READING THE AUDIOGRAMS

The following symbols represent the right ear: Δ & \circ . for the audiogram.

The following symbols represent when the test processor is placed on in the office to determine improvement in hearing of the right ear: [& <.

The following symbols represent the left ear: \square & \times for the audiogram.

The following symbols represent when the test processor is placed on in the office to determine improvement in hearing of the left ear:] & >.

Key: look at the way the symbol is open to help you remember if right or left. Example > is open to the left, so it represents hearing in the left ear.

Conductive hearing loss is when the processor helps the hearing loss by a significant amount. Then an osseointegrating auditory device can be used.

If there is little improvement in hearing with the processor, it is considered sensorineural hearing loss. Either a hearing aid or cochlear implant is needed.

See examples of both types below.

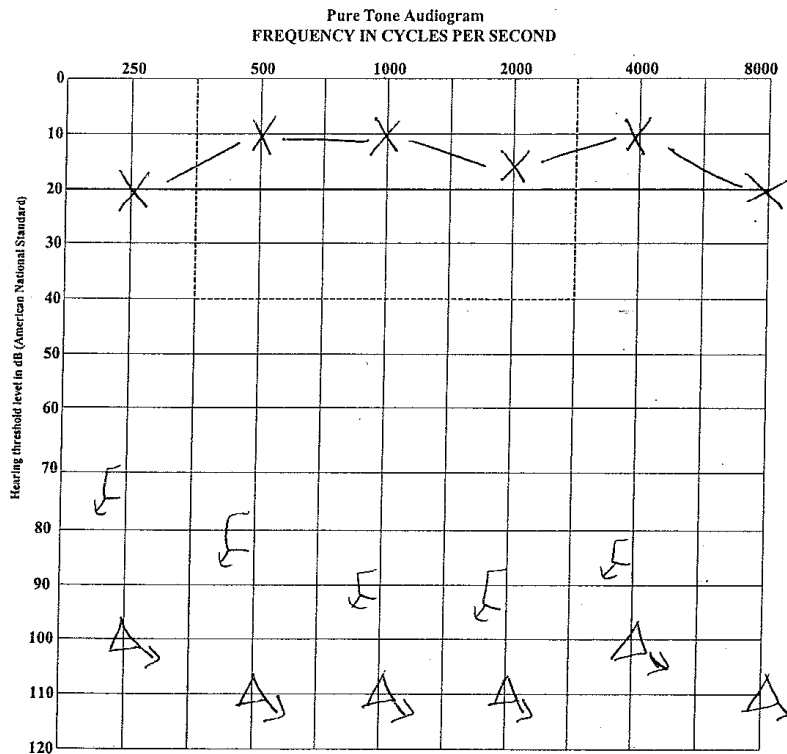
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Patient name: Angelina Jolie
 History number: _____
 Date of test: _____ Baseline
 Date of birth: _____



1000 Langworthy
Dubuque, IA 52001



Examiner B. Henning
 K. Schultz D. Klauer
Audiometer GSI 61 Beltone
Transducer Insert Phones TDH
Reliability Good Fair Poor
Other Play Localizations

	Right	Left
Air Conduction		
Unmasked	O	X
Masked	Δ	□
Bone Conduction		
Unmasked	<	>
Masked		
Sound Field		
Unaided-Aided	S	A
Comfort Level		
Maximum	MC	MC
Uncomfortable	UC	UC

SPEECH RECEPTION THRESHOLD

Right	Left

WORD RECOGNITION

Right	Left
% @ dB	% @ dB

MOST COMFORTABLE LEVEL

Right	Left

UNCOMFORTABLE LEVEL

Right	Left

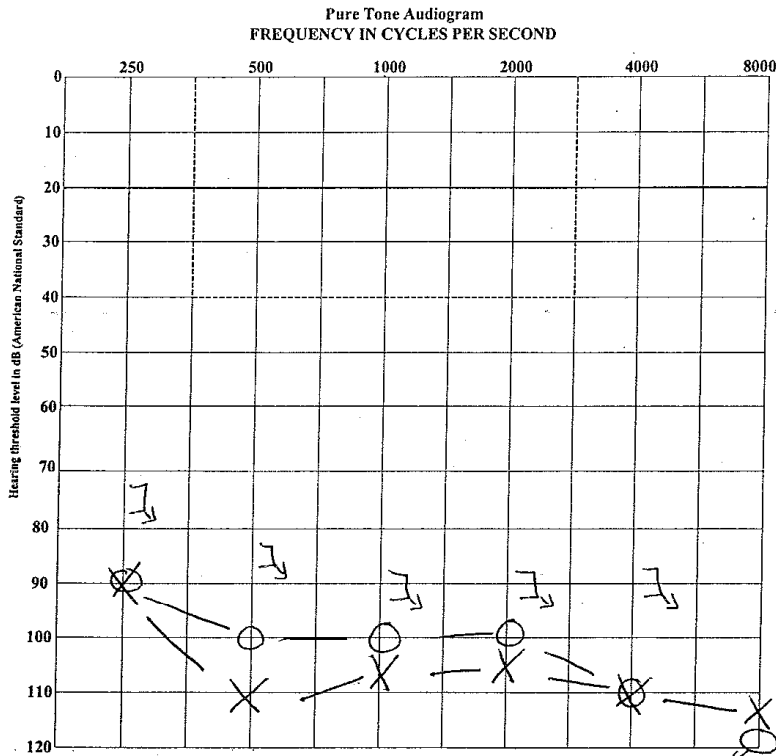
Notes:

Conductive hearing loss (R)
BAHA

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Patient name: Taylor Swift
 History number: _____
 Date of test: _____ Baseline
 Date of birth: _____



Examiner B. Henning
 K. Schultz D. Klauer
Audiometer GSI 61 Beltone
Transducer Insert Phones TDH
Reliability Good Fair Poor
Other Play Localizations

	Right	Left
Air Conduction		
Unmasked	O	X
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Sound Field		
Unaided-Aided	S	A
Comfort Level		
Maximum	MC	MC
Uncomfortable	UC	UC

SPEECH RECEPTION THRESHOLD

Right	Left

WORD RECOGNITION

Right	Left
% @ dB	% @ dB

MOST COMFORTABLE LEVEL

Right	Left

UNCOMFORTABLE LEVEL

Right	Left

Notes:

Profound sensorineural loss with potential cochlear or hearing aid.