

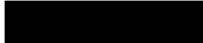
Office of Medicaid BOARD OF HEARINGS

Appellant Name and Address:



Appeal Decision:	Denied	Appeal Number:	2177869
Decision Date:	11/29/2021	Hearing Date:	11/19/2021
Hearing Officer:	Sara E. McGrath		

Appearances for Appellant:



Appearances for MassHealth:

Dr. Sullaway



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
Board of Hearings
100 Hancock Street
Quincy, MA 02171*

APPEAL DECISION

Appeal Decision:	Denied	Issue:	Prior Approval for Dental Services
Decision Date:	11/29/2021	Hearing Date:	11/19/2021
MassHealth Rep.:	Dr. Sullaway	Appellant Rep.:	Pro se
Hearing Location:	Board of Hearings (Remote)		

Authority

This hearing was conducted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapters 118E and 30A, and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

Jurisdiction

Through a notice dated September 21, 2021, MassHealth denied the appellant's request for prior authorization for dental implants, with abutments and crowns, on teeth nos. 4, 8, 9, 15, and 30 (Exhibit 1). The appellant filed a timely appeal on October 14, 2021 (130 CMR 610.015(B); Exhibit 1). Denial of a request for prior authorization is a valid basis for appeal (130 CMR 610.032).

Action Taken by MassHealth

MassHealth denied the appellant's request for prior authorization for dental implants, with abutments and crowns, on teeth nos. 4, 8, 9, 15, and 30.

Issue

The appeal issue is whether MassHealth was correct in denying the appellant's request for prior authorization for dental implants, with abutments and crowns, on teeth nos. 4, 8, 9, 15, and 30.

Summary of Evidence

MassHealth was represented at hearing by Dr. Sullaway, a dental consultant with DentaQuest, the MassHealth dental contractor. Dr. Sullaway testified telephonically; he noted that on September 21, 2021, the appellant's provider submitted a prior authorization request for dental implants, with abutments and crowns, on teeth nos. 4, 8, 9, 15, and 30. Dr. Sullaway explained that MassHealth pays for medically necessary dental implants only for those members under the age of 21. Because the appellant is over the age of 21, MassHealth will not provide coverage for the requested dental services. Dr. Sullaway testified that he reviewed the dental X-ray and physician letter submitted by the appellant, but was nevertheless unable to reverse the MassHealth decision (Exhibits 4 and 5).

The appellant testified telephonically and referenced his physician's letter that documents his diagnoses, including heart disease, hypothyroidism, diabetes, migraines, and night grinding (Exhibit 4). His physician also indicates that the appellant has a severe gag reflex, and he noted that when the appellant tried wearing a partial denture, it affected his speech articulation which adversely impacts his work life (Exhibit 4). The appellant testified that he has been told that under extreme circumstances, MassHealth will pay for dental implants. He explained that because of his missing teeth, he is only able to chew on one side. This has affected his ability to maintain his weight and to meet his nutritional needs. He added that he has spent many thousands of dollars on crowns, but they keep breaking off and are not working well. He experiences a significant amount of pain in his current situation, and has been told that he a good candidate for dental implants. He is worried about aesthetics; he is looking for a marketing job where he will need to interact with the public.

Findings of Fact

Based on a preponderance of the evidence, I find the following facts:

1. On September 21, 2021, the appellant's dental provider submitted a prior authorization request for dental implants, with abutments and crowns, on teeth nos. 4, 8, 9, 15, and 30.
2. On September 21, 2021, MassHealth notified the appellant that the prior authorization request had been denied.
3. On October 14, 2021, the appellant filed a timely appeal of the denial.
4. The appellant is over the age of 21.

Analysis and Conclusions of Law

The issue in this appeal is whether MassHealth correctly denied the appellant's request for five dental implants, as well as the associated abutments and crowns. MassHealth denied the request based on the appellant's age; the appellant contends that the services are medically necessary.

The MassHealth agency does not pay for implants of any type or description for any member, except when MassHealth determines the service to be medically necessary and the member is younger than 21 years old (130 CMR 420.421(B)(5)). Because the appellant is over the age of 21, the requested dental implants, with abutments and crowns, are not covered services and were appropriately denied by MassHealth.

This appeal is denied.

Order for MassHealth

None.

Notification of Your Right to Appeal to Court

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to appeal to Court in accordance with Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General Laws. To appeal, you must file a complaint with the Superior Court for the county where you reside, or Suffolk County Superior Court, within 30 days of your receipt of this decision.

Sara E. McGrath
Hearing Officer
Board of Hearings

cc: DentaQuest