BlueCross BlueShield Arizona
An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association
Health Choice

BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF ARIZONA HEALTH CHOICE
DENTAL CLINICAL REVIEW CRITERIA

Department	**Utilization Management**
Policy Number	**D0014**
Subject	**Professionally Accepted Treatment or Alternative Services (LEPAAT)**
Attachments	**None**

Overview: This clinical review policy provides criteria for applying the Least Expensive Professionally Acceptable Alternative Treatment (LEPAAT) standard when reviewing requested dental services. LEPAAT may be used when more than one professionally accepted treatment option may meet the member's dental needs. The criteria support consistent review of medical and dental necessity and do not guarantee payment, authorize services, or replace the treating provider's clinical judgment.

Coverage determinations are based on the member's eligibility, covered benefits, benefit limitations, exclusions, submitted documentation, medical and dental necessity, and applicable state, federal, AHCCCS, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Health Choice requirements.

Dental guidelines:

1. Applying the LEPAAT standard is not intended to dictate treatment. It identifies the services Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Health Choice may pay for.

A. Complex Dental Care

Complex dental care is defined as treatment of multiple teeth with root canals, build-ups and crowns within a six-month period for dental conditions not related to traumatic injuries. In certain member situations, extensive restorative treatment may not be warranted, and an alternative benefit may be applied to the requested procedures. In addition, when members have multiple unrestorable teeth that need extraction, extensive dental restoration may not be warranted. In these cases, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Health Choice requires a complete treatment plan with appropriate diagnostic radiographs.

These situations include, but are not limited to:

- Substance abuse
- Rampant caries
- Gross or extensive caries
- Missing teeth

- Unrestorable teeth
- Periodontal disease, including gingivitis and periodontitis
- Inadequate home care
- Lack of arch integrity
- Poor dental history
- Poor prognosis
- Mental and/or behavioral disorders
- Eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa

Under these situations, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Health Choice may not approve multiple root canal treatments and subsequent buildups and/or crowns. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Health Choice may consider extraction of the teeth and placement of removable prosthetics for members through age 20 when medical and dental necessity is established, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Health Choice guidelines and criteria are met.

Complex dental care may only be approved when medically and dentally necessary and when there is documentation for a high probability of success. Documentation required for approval of complex dental care:

a. Evidence of missing or unrestorable teeth.
b. Evidence that the causative agent or etiology of the oral disease process has been identified and can be treated.
c. Evidence that the member is compliant with the prescribed oral regimen.
d. Evidence that the disease process has been eliminated or controlled.

B. Other applications of LEPAAT include, but are not limited to:

When small, cavitated, carious lesions are requested for treatment under general anesthesia, Silver diamine fluoride (SDF) may be considered the least expensive professionally acceptable alternative treatment (LEPAAT) when clinically appropriate. SDF alternative applies to lesions that are non-symptomatic and without pulpal involvement and when general anesthetic is not warranted by other lesions or behavior.

References:

- American Dental Association. Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline on Nonrestorative Treatments for Carious Lesions. JADA. 2018.
- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Chairside Guide: Silver Diamine Fluoride in the Management of Dental Caries Lesions.
- American Dental Association. Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) Application: Evidence-Based Recommendations. 2023
- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. *Pediatric Restorative Dentistry*. The Reference Manual of Pediatric Dentistry. 2025.

- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Pulp Therapy for Primary and Immature Permanent Teeth: Indications and Objectives. The Reference Manual of Pediatric Dentistry. 2026.

Policy History/Review Date

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This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.