

## NONPHYSICIAN ANESTHETIST

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### I. ISSUE

**Nonphysician Anesthetist.**

### II. POLICY

**A. Nurse Anesthetist.** The following criteria must be met for coverage of anesthesia services by a nurse anesthetist:

1. The nurse anesthetist is operating within the scope of his or her license or certification required in the jurisdiction where practicing; and
2. The nurse is a licensed registered nurse.
3. The nurse anesthetist is an independent individual professional provider **and** is not employed by an institution, physician anesthesiology group, or individual practitioner.
4. Nurse anesthetists who are employees of an institution or physician anesthesiology group or individual practitioner, will only be reimbursed when billed by the institution or physician anesthesiology group or individual practitioner for which the nurse anesthetist is employed.

**B. Anesthesiologist Assistant (AA).** The following criteria must be met for coverage of anesthesia services by an anesthesiologist assistant.

1. The AA works under the direct supervision of an anesthesiologist who bills for the services. In addition, for each patient the anesthesiologist must:
  - a. Perform a pre-anesthetic examination and evaluation;
  - b. Prescribe the anesthesia plan;
  - c. Personally participate in the most demanding aspects of the anesthesia plan including, if applicable, induction and emergence;
  - d. Monitor the course of anesthesia administration at frequent intervals;

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e. Remain physically present and available for immediate personal diagnosis and treatment of emergencies. While it is not necessary that the anesthesiologist be personally present for all services, the anesthesiologist must be within the operating suite and available to provide immediate assistance.

f. Provide indicated post anesthesia care; and

g. Perform no other services while he or she supervises no more than four AAs concurrently. If the state where the service is provided limits anesthesiologists to supervising fewer than four AAs concurrently, the limit established by the state is to be used.

2. The AA is in compliance with all applicable requirements of state law, including any licensure requirements the state imposes on nonphysician anesthetists.

3. The AA is a graduate of a Master's level anesthesiologist assistant educational program that is established under auspices of an accredited medical school and that:

a. Is accredited by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation, or its successor organization; and

b. Includes approximately two years of specialized basic science and clinical education in anesthesia at a level that builds on a premedical undergraduate science background.

c. The only programs that currently qualify are at Case Western Reserve University and Emory University.

### III. EFFECTIVE DATE

For anesthesiologist assistants, to be determined.

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