

MEDICAL POLICY

Highmark's medical policies are documents that provide medical necessity and coverage guidelines for all of our medical-surgical products. These guidelines address hundreds of medical issues, including diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, injectable drugs, and durable medical equipment.

Highmark's Medical Policy guidelines have been integrated into the claims processing system, which allows for cost-effective claims processing and ensures accurate administration of our members' health care benefits. In addition to medical policies for our commercial products, Highmark also maintains medical policy guidelines for our Medicare Advantage products in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Medical policies may differ in our service areas based on state regulatory requirements. Please be sure to access the appropriate medical policies from the Provider Resource Center for your service area and/or based on the member's coverage.

Highmark continually reviews its existing medical policies to ensure that they reflect evidence-based medicine, the current standard of care, and the appropriate place of service. Highmark's Medical Policy Department ensures that medical policies are developed and maintained in accordance with standards of regulatory agencies, such as the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), and with the national Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. For Highmark Medicare Advantage products, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires that Medicare Advantage insurers use CMS national policy and the regional Medicare B Carrier's local policy.

MEDICAL POLICY UPDATE

The *Medical Policy Update* newsletter, published monthly, focuses exclusively on upcoming medical policy and claims administration updates (including coding guidelines and procedure code revisions), and is the sole source for this information. This publication serves as one of Highmark's official notifications of new and revised policies and procedures.

It is important for all participating providers and their office staffs to review each issue of *Medical Policy Update*. You can sign up for "e-Subscribe" and receive a monthly email notification when the latest issue of *Medical Policy Update* is published. To subscribe, select **eSUBSCRIBE** from the **Quicklinks Bar** at the top of the Provider Resource Center, complete all required fields, and then click **SUBMIT**.

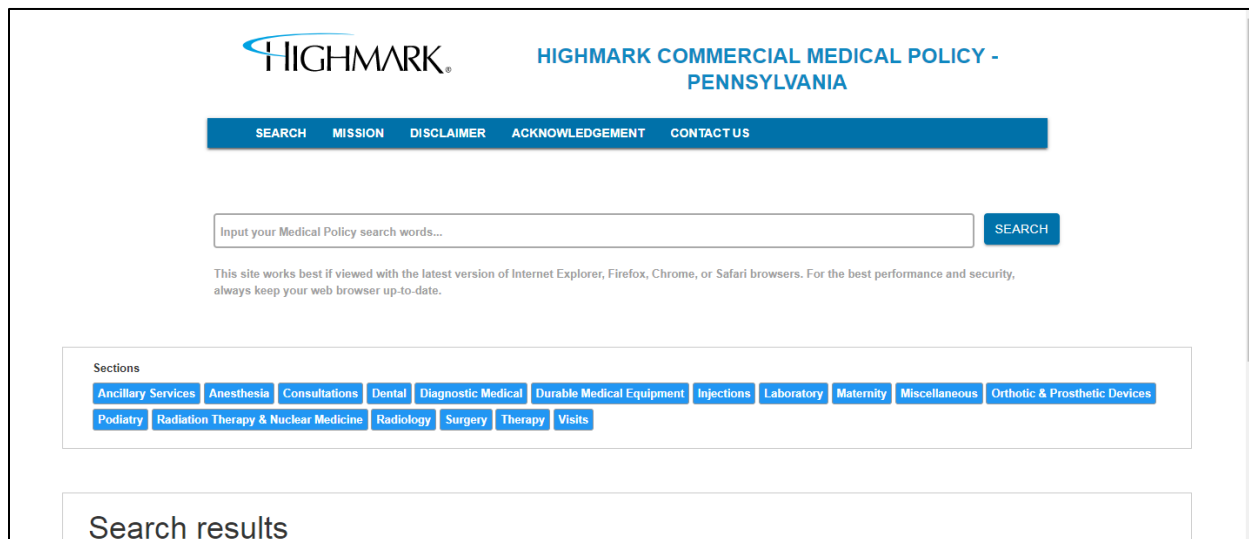
ACCESSING MEDICAL POLICY

Highmark's commercial and Medicare Advantage medical policies are accessed on the Provider Resource Center under **CLAIMS, PAYMENT & REIMBURSEMENT**. Select **Medical Policy** from the options, and then the medical policy type – **Highmark Medical Policy** or **Medicare Advantage Medical Policy** (Medicare Advantage applies only in Pennsylvania and West Virginia). On the next screen, select the **Medical Policy Search** option to access specific Medical Policy guidelines.

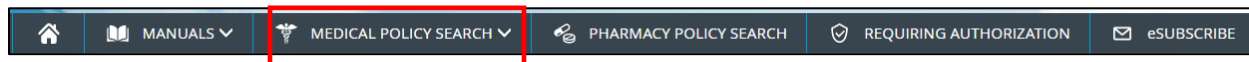


When you reach the Medical Policy search screen, you can search for a particular medical policy by entering a key word, a diagnosis, a CPT or HCPCS code, or the policy number within the search box. The related options will appear in a list under **Search results**. You can then click on a selection to open and review a Medical Policy.

In addition, you can display all options for a particular topic by clicking on a category in the **Sections** box on the screen.



NOTE: For quick access directly to the search screen above, you can click on the **MEDICAL POLICY SEARCH** button on the **Quicklinks Bar** at the top of the Provider Resource Center:



WHERE TO FIND THIS INFORMATION ON THE PROVIDER RESOURCE CENTER

For additional information on Highmark Medical Policy, please refer to the following *Highmark Provider Manual* units:

- [Chapter 5.1: Care Management Overview](#) (for Commercial Medical Policy)
- [Chapter 5.3: Medicare Advantage Procedures](#) (for Medicare Advantage Medical Policy for Pennsylvania and West Virginia)

The *Medical Policy Update* newsletters, both current and past issues, are available by selecting **NEWSLETTERS/NOTICES** from the main menu on the left of the Provider Resource Center.