UniCare Professional Reimbursement Policy

Subject: Documentation Guidelines for Central Nervous System Assessments and Tests
Policy #: UniCare – 0046
Adopted: 10/07/2014
Effective: 11/01/2016

Coverage is subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of an individual member’s programs or products and policy criteria listed below.

Description
Central nervous system (CNS) assessments and/or tests involve the testing of cognitive processes, visual motor responses, and abstractive abilities and are accomplished by the combination of several types of testing procedures. It is expected that the administration of these tests will generate material that will be formulated into a report that will provide information which may be useful in treating and caring for the patient. Assessments and testing includes psychological and neuropsychological testing, aphasia assessment, developmental testing, and neurobehavioral status exam.

Psychological testing is used to measure personality, emotions, intellectual functioning, and psychopathology, and to make a diagnosis or diagnoses and suggest treatment. This service encompasses face to face time, interpretation of the test(s) and preparing a report.

Assessment of aphasia is used as an assessment of communication skills and encompasses face-to-face time, interpretation of the test(s) and preparing a report. The report addresses the treatment plan implications of the exam.

Developmental testing is similar to aphasia testing and is a limited assessment for children and adolescents. This service encompasses face to face time, interpretation of the test(s) and preparing a report. The report addresses the treatment plan implications of the exam.

Neurobehavioral status exam is completed prior to the administration of neuropsychological testing and is often used to develop a testing plan but may be used more broadly to assess thinking (cognitive function) when dysfunction is expected as outlined in the rationale for the exam. This service encompasses face to face time, interpretation of the test(s) and preparing a report.

Neuropsychological testing is used to measure deficits or detect impairments in cognitive functioning, such as the ability to think, speak, reason, etc., which may be the result of brain damage, injury, or other organic neurological condition that results in the loss of some sort of cognitive function. This service encompasses face to face time, interpretation of the test(s) and preparing a report.

Standardized cognitive performance testing is used to evaluate such factors as the patient’s immediate, recent, and remote memory; temporal and spatial orientation; general information recall; problem-solving and abstract reasoning abilities; organizational skills; and auditory processing and retention. This
service encompasses face to face time, interpretation of the test(s) and preparing a report which
addresses the treatment plan implications of the exam.

This policy addresses UniCare’s documentation guidelines for central nervous system (CNS) assessments
and tests.

**Policy**

Central nervous system (CNS) assessments/tests (e.g., neuro-cognitive, mental status, speech testing)
are used to assist in the assessment of cognitive impairment due to medical or psychiatric conditions
and involves various types of assessments and testing.

Psychological testing is administered by the use of various tools such as written (e.g., questionnaires or
checklists), visual (e.g., Rorschach inkblot test), or verbal evaluations (e.g., clinical interview). It involves
the administration of a series of various written, oral, computer, or combined formats that measures
personality, emotions, intellectual functioning, and psychopathology.

Assessment of aphasia involves the physician or other health care professional administering tests to
measure communication problems such as speech and writing in a patient who suffers from a
dysfunction to the parts of the brain that control language.

Developmental testing is used to measure cognitive, motor, social, language, adaptive, and/or cognitive
abilities using standardized tests (meeting industry standards) via written, oral, or combined format
testing. This applies to testing for developmental disorders and includes the interpretation and report
on the findings.

Neurobehavioral status exam involves clinical assessment of the patient, collateral interviews (as
appropriate), and review of prior records. The interview would involve clinical assessment of several
domains including, but not limited to, thinking, reasoning and judgment.

Neuropsychological testing uses standard techniques to objectively test behavioral and cognitive
abilities of patients, comparing the patient’s results to established normal results. Neuropsychological
testing generally involves the use of paper/pencil and mechanical procedures and carries little, if any,
risk to the patient. A complete neuropsychological evaluation includes:

a. a review of information from the referral
b. a face-to-face evaluation with the patient and/or the family, at which time some screening
tests may be done;
c. administration of various neuropsychological tests tailored to the patient’s condition, and
d. test scoring and interpretation, which is reviewed with the referring clinician and/or the
patient, for example Halstead-Reitan, LURIA, and WAIS-R testing

UniCare requires that the medical record documentation for CNS assessments/tests must be legible,
signed, dated, and must contain, at a minimum, the following elements:

a. relevant medical and personal history
b. results of initial evaluation determining the need for testing
c. suspected mental illness and / or neuropsychological abnormality/dysfunction
d. types of testing indicated
e. previous testing (if conducted) by same or different provider and efforts to obtain those
results
f. tests administered, scoring, and interpretation
g. time involved for each test performed;
   • when the testing is done over several days, the testing time should be reported all on
the last date of service.
### Coding

The following list of codes is provided as an informational tool only. The inclusion or exclusion of a specific code does not indicate eligibility for reimbursement and/or coverage in all situations.

**According to Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), a minimum of 31 minutes must be provided to report any per hour code.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96101</td>
<td>Psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality and psychopathology, e.g., MMPI, Rorschach, WAIS), per hour of the psychologist’s or physician’s time, both face-to-face time administering tests to the patient and time interpreting these test results and preparing the report</td>
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<tr>
<td>96102</td>
<td>Psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality and psychopathology, e.g., MMPI and WAIS), with qualified health care professional interpretation and report, administered by technician, per hour of technician time, face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96103</td>
<td>Psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality and psychopathology, e.g., MMPI), administered by a computer, with qualified health care professional interpretation and report</td>
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<tr>
<td>96105</td>
<td>Assessment of aphasia (includes assessment of expressive and receptive speech and language function, language comprehension, speech production ability, reading, spelling, writing, e.g., by Boston Diagnostic Aphasia Examination) with interpretation and report, per hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>96111</td>
<td>Developmental testing, (includes assessment of motor, language, social, adaptive, and/or cognitive functioning by standardized developmental instruments) with interpretation and report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96116</td>
<td>Neurobehavioral status exam (clinical assessment of thinking, reasoning and judgment, e.g., acquired knowledge, attention, language, memory, planning and problem solving, and visual spatial abilities), per hour of the psychologist’s or physician’s time, both face-to-face time with the patient and time interpreting test results and preparing the report</td>
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<tr>
<td>96118</td>
<td>Neuropsychological testing (e.g., Halstead-Reitan Neuropsychological Battery, Wechsler Memory Scales and Wisconsin Card Sorting Test), per hour of the psychologist’s or physician’s time, both face-to-face time administering tests to the patient and time interpreting these test results and preparing the report</td>
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<tr>
<td>96119</td>
<td>Neuropsychological testing (e.g., Halstead-Reitan Neuropsychological Battery, Wechsler Memory Scales and Wisconsin Card Sorting Test), per hour of the psychologist’s or physician’s time, both face-to-face time administering tests to the patient and time interpreting these test results and preparing the report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96120</td>
<td>Neuropsychological testing (e.g., Wisconsin Card Sorting Test), administered by a computer, with qualified health care professional interpretation and report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96125</td>
<td>Standardized cognitive performance testing (e.g., Ross Information Processing Assessment) per hour of a qualified health care professional’s time, both face-to-face time administering tests to the patient and time interpreting these test results and preparing the report</td>
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<td>Policy History</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/07/2014</td>
<td>Adopted by Enterprise Professional Reimbursement Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/06/2015</td>
<td>Annual Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/01/2016</td>
<td>Annual Review</td>
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*CPT® is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association

**Use of Reimbursement Policy:**
This policy is subject to federal and state laws, to the extent applicable, as well as the terms, conditions, and limitations of a member’s benefits on the date of service. Reimbursement Policy is constantly evolving and we reserve the right to review and update these policies periodically.

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