

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Department of Health Care Finance**



Office of the Deputy Director/Medicaid Director

**Transmittal # 22-13**

**TO:** All DC Medicaid Providers

**FROM:** Melisa Byrd  
Senior Deputy Director and State Medicaid Director

**DATE:** March 23, 2022

**SUBJECT:** **Adding Coverage for Cologuard®, an At-Home Screening for Colorectal Cancer**

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**Purpose**

The Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) is committed to ensuring District residents have access to colorectal cancer screening services in the professional setting. This transmittal provides notice of coverage and reimbursement for the at-home screening for colon cancer using a laboratory test that looks for genetic abnormalities which increase colon cancer risk. The test is commonly referred to as Cologuard® and is reported using billing code 81528 (oncology colorectal scr) in the professional fee schedule. It is covered by Medicaid once every three years. The reimbursement rate for this laboratory test is based on the published guidance by CMS and in accordance with the District of Columbia payment policy. This is applicable for fee-for-service providers that bill procedure codes on CMS-1500 claim forms and for providers enrolled in Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) networks.

**Background**

In accordance with the Code of the District of Columbia Subchapter II. Colorectal Cancer Screening Insurance Coverage at § 31-2931, Cologuard® has been approved for colorectal cancer screening effective October 1, 2021. This laboratory test is a non-invasive screening that is delivered to the home for collection, which is later interpreted for results by a certified reference laboratory and ordering provider. The screening can detect colorectal neoplasms or cancer associated with certain genetic markers and the presence of occult blood. Cologuard® for colorectal cancer screening is for males or females with an average risk of colorectal cancer who are between ages 45 and 85, or as otherwise updated in accordance with the American Cancer Society and the United States Prevention Task Force. Cologuard® is not intended to replace diagnostic colonoscopy in high-risk beneficiaries. Cologuard® is not indicated when active signs or symptoms exist, a family or personal history of colorectal cancer is present when a previous positive test from another colorectal screening test has occurred within the last six months, or for when conditions associated with high risk for developing colon cancer are present in individuals.

**For MCO beneficiaries:** Providers should follow instructions provided by the beneficiary's MCO for billing for Cologuard®. MCOs are required to reimburse providers at or above the rates published in this transmittal. Contact the appropriate MCO for more information:

- AmeriHealth Caritas DC Provider Services: 202-408-2237 or 1-888-656-2383
- CareFirst Community Health Plan DC Provider Services: 202-821-1100
- Health Services for Children with Special Needs (HSCSN) Provider Services: 202-495-7526
- MedStar Family Choice-DC Provider Services: 855-798-4244

### Contact

Please refer to the DHCF provider fee schedule available at <https://www.dc-medicaid.com> for all future updates related to coverage of colorectal cancer screening, and for the most up-to-date information on pricing. If you have questions, please contact Amy Xing, Reimbursement Analyst, at [amy.xing2@dc.gov](mailto:amy.xing2@dc.gov) or 202-481-3375.

**Cc:** DC Hospital Association  
DC Primary Care Association  
DC Health Care Association  
DC Home Health Association  
DC Behavioral Health Association  
DC Coalition of Disability Service Providers  
Medical Society of DC