Policy: MP223
Section: Medical Benefit Policy
Subject: Functional Anesthetic Discography

I. Policy: Functional Anesthetic Discography

II. Purpose/Objective:
   To provide a policy of coverage regarding Functional Anesthetic Discography

III. Responsibility:
   A. Medical Directors
   B. Medical Management

IV. Required Definitions
   1. Attachment – a supporting document that is developed and maintained by the policy writer or department requiring/authoring the policy.
   2. Exhibit – a supporting document developed and maintained in a department other than the department requiring/authoring the policy.
   3. Devised – the date the policy was implemented.
   4. Revised – the date of every revision to the policy, including typographical and grammatical changes.
   5. Reviewed – the date documenting the annual review if the policy has no revisions necessary.

V. Additional Definitions
Medical Necessity or Medically Necessary means Covered Services rendered by a Health Care Provider that the Plan determines are:

   a. appropriate for the symptoms and diagnosis or treatment of the Member's condition, illness, disease or injury;
   b. provided for the diagnosis, and the direct care and treatment of the Member's condition, illness disease or injury;
   c. in accordance with current standards of good medical treatment practiced by the general medical community.
   d. not primarily for the convenience of the Member, or the Member's Health Care Provider; and
   e. the most appropriate source or level of service that can safely be provided to the Member. When applied to hospitalization, this further means that the Member requires acute care as an inpatient due to the nature of the services rendered or the Member's condition, and the Member cannot receive safe or adequate care as an outpatient.

Medicaid Business Segment
Medical Necessity shall mean a service or benefit that is compensable under the Medical Assistance Program and if it meets any one of the following standards:

   (i) The service or benefit will, or is reasonably expected to, prevent the onset of an illness, condition or disability.
   (ii) The service or benefit will, or is reasonably expected to, reduce or ameliorate the physical, mental or development effects of an illness, condition, injury or disability.
   (iii) The service or benefit will assist the Member to achieve or maintain maximum functional
capacity in performing daily activities, taking into account both the functional capacity of the Member and those functional capacities that are appropriate for members of the same age.

**DESCRIPTION:**
Functional anesthetic discography (FAD) is a diagnostic procedure that involves injecting an anesthetic agent directly into a spinal disc. During this procedure, under light sedation and x-ray guidance, a small catheter is inserted into the suspected disc and anchored in place with a small balloon. After recovering from light sedation, the patient is asked to engage in physical activity to reproduce pain. Local anesthetic is then injected in the disc believed to be causing the patient's pain. Reduction in pain is considered diagnostic. If the injection into a specific disc relieves the patient's back pain, the disc can be further evaluated for potential treatment. If the test does not relieve the patient's pain, the physician can investigate other possible causes of pain.

**EXCLUSIONS:** The Plan does NOT provide coverage for the use of functional anesthetic discography (FAD) because it is considered experimental, investigational or unproven. The Geisinger Technology Assessment Committee evaluated this technology and concluded that there is insufficient evidence in the peer-reviewed published medical literature to establish the effectiveness of this technology on health outcomes when compared to established tests or technologies.

Note: A complete description of the process by which a given technology or service is evaluated and determined to be experimental, investigational or unproven is outlined in MP 15 - Experimental Investigational or Unproven Services or Treatment.

**LINE OF BUSINESS:**
Eligibility and contract specific benefits, limitations and/or exclusions will apply. Coverage statements found in the line of business specific benefit document will supersede this policy. For Medicare, applicable LCD’s and NCD’s will supersede this policy. For PA Medicaid Business segment, this policy applies as written.

**REFERENCES:**


ECRI Institute. Hotline. Discyphor Catheter System (Kyphon/Medtronic) for Functional Anesthetic Discography. 5/19/2014

This policy will be revised as necessary and reviewed no less than annually.

**Devised:** 11/19/08

**Revised:**

**Reviewed:** 12/09, 12/10, 1/12, 1/13, 1/14, 1/15, 1/16, 1/17, 1/18