MEDICAL POLICY

POLICY TITLE	PHARYNGOMETRY AND RHINOMETRY
POLICY NUMBER	MP 2.088

CLINICAL BENEFIT	☒ MINIMIZE SAFETY RISK OR CONCERN. ☒ MINIMIZE HARMFUL OR INEFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS. ☐ ASSURE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF CARE. ☐ ASSURE APPROPRIATE DURATION OF SERVICE FOR INTERVENTIONS. ☐ ASSURE THAT RECOMMENDED MEDICAL PREREQUISITES HAVE BEEN MET. ☐ ASSURE APPROPRIATE SITE OF TREATMENT OR SERVICE.
Effective Date:	**5/1/2024**

I. POLICY

Pharyngometry and rhinometry are considered **investigational** as techniques for screening, diagnosis, or treatment planning in persons with known or suspected obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) and for all other indications. There is insufficient evidence to support a general conclusion concerning the health outcomes or benefits associated with these procedures.

Cross-references:

MP 1.128 Surgical Treatment of Snoring and Obstructive Sleep Apnea
MP 2.045 Diagnosis and Medical Management of Obstructive Sleep Apnea

II. PRODUCT VARIATIONS

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This policy is only applicable to certain programs and products administered by Capital Blue Cross and subject to benefit variations as discussed in Section VI. Please see additional information below.

FEP PPO - Refer to FEP Medical Policy Manual. The FEP Medical Policy manual can be found at: https://www.fepblue.org/benefit-plans/medical-policies-and-utilization-management-guidelines/medical-policies

III. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

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Rhinomanometry, acoustic rhinometry, and optical rhinometry are techniques to objectively measure nasal patency. Several clinical applications are proposed including allergy testing, evaluation of obstructive sleep apnea, and patient assessment prior to nasal surgery.

Nasal patency is a complex clinical issue that can involve mucosal, structural and psychological factors. The perception of nasal obstruction is subjective and does not always correlate with clinical examination of the nasal cavity, making it difficult to determine which therapy might be most likely to restore satisfactory nasal breathing. Therefore, procedures that objectively

measure nasal patency have been sought. Discussion of 3 techniques that could potentially be useful in measuring nasal patency follows.

Rhinomanometry is a test of nasal function that measures air pressure and the rate of airflow in the nasal airway during respiration. These findings are used to calculate nasal airway resistance. Rhinomanometry is intended to be an objective quantification of nasal airway patency.

Acoustic rhinometry is a technique intended for assessment of the geometry of the nasal cavity and nasopharynx and for evaluating nasal obstruction. The technique is based on an analysis of sound waves reflected from the nasal cavities.

Optical rhinometry uses an emitter and a detector placed at opposite sides of the nose and can detect relative changes in nasal congestion by the change in transmitted light. This technique is based on the absorption of red/near-infrared light by hemoglobin and the endonasal swelling-associated increase in local blood volume.

Acoustic pharyngometry also uses acoustic reflection for volume analysis of oro-pharynometric parameters to establish a correlation between morpho-volumetric variations of oro-pharyngo-laryngeal spaces and the presence and severity of disease. Acoustic pharyngometry is a method of investigating obstruction in sleep disordered breathing together with other exams such as cephalometrics, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging and fibronasopharngolaryngoscopy etc. It is also used to monitor medical and surgical treatments for the management of obstructive sleep apnea.

Acoustic Pharyngometer

The Eccovision® Acoustic Pharyngometer (Sleep Group Solutions) is a device which uses acoustic reflection technology to measure the patient's pharyngeal airway size and stability from the Oral Pharyngeal Junction to the Glottis. Sound waves are projected down the airway and reflected back in such a way that the Pharyngometer software can analyze and quantify changes in the airways cross-sectional area. The data is graphically displayed showing the relationship between the cross-sectional area of the airway and distance in centimeters. Studies suggest a relationship between the existence of obstructive sleep apnea and a narrow, collapsible, airway. The test is completed with the patient awake and seated during the exam which takes 2-5 minutes to complete.

Acoustic Rhinometer

The Eccovision® Acoustic Rhinometer (Sleep Group Solutions) also uses acoustic reflection technology and measures nasal patency and maps out the topography of the nasal airway identifying the location and severity of airway obstruction. The test is completed with the patient awake and seated during the exam which takes 30 seconds to complete.

IV. RATIONALE

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Summary

Overall, the scientific evidence does not permit conclusions about the effect of rhinomanometry, acoustic rhinometry or optical rhinometry on net health outcome. To date, no studies have been published that evaluate the clinical utility of these tests. That is, none of the studies identified

have prospectively compared patient outcomes with and without the use of one or more of these tests for any clinical condition. Therefore, the technologies are considered investigational.

V. Definitions

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ACOUSTIC REFLECTION technology is based on the analysis of sound waves that are launched from a loudspeaker and travel along a wave tube into the subject's airways where they are reflected. Measurement of differences in the reflected wave signals enables a graphic representation of the variations in pharyngeal cross-sectional area at several anatomic levels.

ACOUSTIC PHARYNGOMETRY is a non-invasive technique using acoustic reflection that quantifies geometrically complex pharyngeal dimensions in order to assess the upper airway for possible site(s) of obstruction.

ACOUSTIC RHINOMETRY is a non-invasive technique using acoustic reflection to study nasal physiology. It may be used to evaluate the nasal cavity to aid in the identification of fixed lesions such as septal deviations or alterations in cross-sectional area induced by allergens or drugs.

VI. BENEFIT VARIATIONS

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The existence of this medical policy does not mean that this service is a covered benefit under the member's health benefit plan. Benefit determinations should be based in all cases on the applicable health benefit plan language. Medical policies do not constitute a description of benefits. A member's health benefit plan governs which services are covered, which are excluded, which are subject to benefit limits, and which require preauthorization. There are different benefit plan designs in each product administered by Capital Blue Cross. Members and providers should consult the member's health benefit plan for information or contact Capital Blue Cross for benefit information.

VII. DISCLAIMER

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Capital Blue Cross's medical policies are developed to assist in administering a member's benefits, do not constitute medical advice and are subject to change. Treating providers are solely responsible for medical advice and treatment of members. Members should discuss any medical policy related to their coverage or condition with their provider and consult their benefit information to determine if the service is covered. If there is a discrepancy between this medical policy and a member's benefit information, the benefit information will govern. If a provider or a member has a question concerning the application of this medical policy to a specific member's plan of benefits, please contact Capital Blue Cross' Provider Services or Member Services. Capital Blue Cross considers the information contained in this medical policy to be proprietary and it may only be disseminated as permitted by law.

VIII. CODING INFORMATION

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Note: This list of codes may not be all-inclusive, and codes are subject to change at any time. The identification of a code in this section does not denote coverage as coverage is determined by the terms of member benefit information. In addition, not all covered services are eligible for separate reimbursement.

Investigational; therefore, not covered:

Procedure Codes							
92512	92520	92700					

IX. REFERENCES

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23. *Blue Cross Blue Shield Association Medical Policy Reference Manual. 2.01.08, Rhinomanometry and Acoustic Optical Rhinometry. Archived. March 2010.*

X. POLICY HISTORY

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MP 2.088	**4/10/2020 Consensus review**. No change to policy statement. References and codes reviewed.
	8/9/2021 Consensus review. No change to policy statement. References and coding reviewed.
	9/7/2022 Consensus review. Updated FEP and references. No changes to coding.
	1/6/2023 Consensus review. No Change to policy statement. References and coding reviewed.
	1/16/2024 Consensus review. Updated references. No changes to coding.

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