



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
MCO Transmittal No. 161
December 6, 2022

TO: Managed Care Organizations

FROM: Sandra Kick *Sandra E. Kick*
 Director, Medical Benefits Management

RE: Clarification of HealthChoice Coverage of Cologuard for Colorectal Cancer Screening

NOTE: Please ensure that the appropriate staff members in your organization are informed of the content of this transmittal.

The purpose of this transmittal is to clarify that HealthChoice managed care organization (MCO) coverage of fecal immunochemical testing (FIT-DNA), also known as Cologuard, should align with the Maryland Medicaid fee-for-service (FFS) coverage currently in effect.

The Medicaid FFS coverage expansion, which took effect October 1, 2021, responded to revised recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) in May 2021 to initiate colorectal cancer screenings for adults beginning as early as age 45 through age 85, compared to previous guidance advising screenings to begin at age 50. The USPSTF updated their recommendations in response to the increased prevalence of new colorectal cancer diagnoses in individuals ages 40 through 49. Cologuard should be provided as a testing option without preauthorization for individuals of average risk for colorectal cancer once every three years.

The Cologuard test is covered under laboratory CPT code 81528, described as “oncology (colorectal) screening, quantitative real-time target and signal amplification of 10 DNA markers (KRAS mutations, promoter methylation of NDRG4 and BMP3) and fecal hemoglobin, utilizing stool, algorithm reported as a positive or negative result.” Current Medicaid FFS reimbursement for the code is \$404.55. To view the Medicaid FFS clinical criteria, please go to health.maryland.gov and search “Colon Cancer Screening Updates” or visit the following link: <http://bit.ly/3i6xWg0>.

For questions about this transmittal, please contact the Division of HealthChoice Provider Network Management at mdh.healthchoiceprovider@maryland.gov.