

**Health Technology Clinical Committee
DRAFT Findings and Decision**

Topic: Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) for sudden sensorineural hearing loss

Meeting date: March 21, 2025

Final adoption: Pending

Number and coverage topic:

20250321A – Hyperbaric oxygen therapy for sensorineural hearing loss and acute acoustic trauma

HTCC coverage determination:

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) for idiopathic sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL) and acute acoustic trauma (AAT) are **covered benefits with conditions**.

HTCC reimbursement determination:

Limitations of coverage:

- Covered for idiopathic SSNHL and AAT for individuals with:
 - Moderate to severe hearing loss, AND
 - Treatment must start within 30 days of onset

Non-covered indicators:

- N/A

Notes:

- See previous determination (20130322A) for additional HBOT findings and decision.

Related documents:

- [Final key questions](#)
- [Final evidence report](#)
- [Meeting materials and transcript](#)

Agency contact information:

Agency	Phone Number
Labor and Industries	1-800-547-8367
Public and School Employees Health Plan	1-800-200-1004
Washington State Medicaid	1-800-562-3022

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HTCC coverage vote and formal action:

Committee decision

Based on the deliberations of key health outcomes, the committee decided that it had the most complete information: a comprehensive and current evidence report, public comments, and state agency utilization information. The committee discussed and voted separately on the evidence for the use of hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) for idiopathic sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL) and acute acoustic trauma (AAT). The committee decided that the current evidence on SSNHL and AAT is sufficient to determine coverage with conditions. The committee considered the evidence, public comment, and expert input, and gave greatest weight to the evidence it determined, based on objective factors, to be the most valid and reliable.

Based on these findings, the committee voted to cover with conditions HBOT for SSNHL and AAT.

	Not covered	Covered under certain conditions	Covered unconditionally
Sudden sensorineural hearing loss	0	7	1
Acute acoustic trauma	3	5	0

Discussion

The committee reviewed and discussed the available studies on HBOT for sensorineural hearing loss and acute acoustic trauma. Details of study design, inclusion criteria, outcomes and other factors affecting study quality were discussed. In addition to consideration of the evidence from the report and evidence shared by public commenters, the committee discussed other payer policies and the relationship to Medicare and HTCC decision process. A majority of committee members present supported the conditions of coverage of HBOT for SSNHL and AAT. Details of study design, inclusion criteria, outcomes, cost, cost-effectiveness, and other factors affecting study quality were discussed as well as clinical application.

Action

The committee checked for availability of a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) national coverage decision (NCD). Based on the information provided in the systematic review, there are no NCD's for HBOT specific to the SSNHL indication.

The committee discussed clinical guidelines identified from the following organizations:

- American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery Foundation (AAO-HNSF): Clinical practice guideline: sudden hearing loss (updated), 2019
- European Committee for Hyperbaric Medicine (ECHM): The Tenth European Conference on Hyperbaric Medicine, 2017
- National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE): Hearing loss in adults (updated 2023), 2018
- The Underseas and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS): Idiopathic SSNHL, 2011

The recommendations of the guidelines vary. The committee's determination is consistent with the noted guidelines.

HTA staff will prepare a findings and decision document on HBOT for SSNHL and AAT for public comment to be followed by consideration for final approval at the next committee meeting.

Health Technology Clinical Committee Authority:

Washington State's legislature believes it is important to use a science-based, clinician-centered approach for difficult and important health care benefit decisions. Pursuant to chapter 70.14 RCW, the legislature has directed the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA), through its Health Technology Assessment (HTA) program, to engage in an evaluation process that gathers and assesses the quality of the latest medical evidence using a scientific research company that takes public input at all stages.

Pursuant to RCW 70.14.110, a Health Technology Clinical Committee (HTCC) composed of eleven independent health care professionals reviews all the information and renders a decision at an open public meeting. The Washington State HTCC determines how selected health technologies are covered by several state agencies (RCW 70.14.080-140). These technologies may include medical or surgical devices and procedures, medical equipment, and diagnostic tests. HTCC bases its decisions on evidence of the technology's safety, efficacy, and cost effectiveness. Participating state agencies are required to comply with the decisions of the HTCC. HTCC decisions may be re-reviewed at the determination of the HCA Director.