	Reimbursement Policy

Subject: Modifier 78: Unplanned Return to the Operating/Procedure Room by the Same Physician Following Initial Procedure for a Related Procedure During the Postoperative Period

Effective Date: **01/01/20**	Committee Approval Obtained: **01/01/20**	Section: **Administration**

***** The most current version of our reimbursement policies can be found on our provider website. If you are using a printed version of this policy, please verify the information by going to **https://providers.healthybluela.com**.*****

These policies serve as a guide to assist you in accurate claims submissions and to outline the basis for reimbursement if the service is covered by a Healthy Blue Dual Advantage (HMO D-SNP) member's plan. The determination that a service, procedure, item, etc. is covered under a member's benefit plan is not a determination that you will be reimbursed. Services must meet authorization and medical necessity guidelines appropriate to the procedure and diagnosis as well as to the member's state of residence. You must follow proper billing and submission guidelines. You are required to use industry standard, compliant codes on all claim submissions. Services should be billed with CPT® codes, HCPCS codes and/or revenue codes. The codes denote the services and/or procedures performed. The billed code(s) are required to be fully supported in the medical record and/or office notes. Unless otherwise noted within the policy, our policies apply to participating providers and facilities; a noncontracting provider who accepts Medicare assignment will be reimbursed for services according to the original Medicare reimbursement rates.

If appropriate coding/billing guidelines or current reimbursement policies are not followed, Healthy Blue Dual Advantage may:

- Reject or deny the claim.
- Recover and/or recoup claim payment.

Healthy Blue Dual Advantage reimbursement policies are developed based on nationally accepted industry standards and coding principles. These policies may be superseded by mandates in provider, state, federal, or CMS contracts and/or requirements. System logic or set up may prevent the loading of policies into the claims platforms in the same manner as described; however, Healthy Blue Dual Advantage strives to minimize these variations.

Healthy Blue Dual Advantage reserves the right to review and revise its policies periodically when necessary. When there is an update, we will publish the most current policy to the website.

Policy	Healthy Blue Dual Advantage allows reimbursement for claims billed with Modifier 78 unless provider, federal or CMS contracts and/or requirements indicate otherwise, when the following criteria is met: The return to the operating or procedure room is unplanned.

	• The procedure appended with Modifier 78 is:
	  ○ The appropriate surgical code for the procedure performed.
	  ○ Performed by the same physician who provided the initial procedure.
	  ○ Related to the initial procedure.
	  ○ Performed during the postoperative period of the initial procedure.
	
	Reimbursement is based on a percentage calculated by the Medicare Physician's Fee Schedule database when the modifier is valid for services performed. Reimbursement is based on the surgical procedure only, not including preoperative or postoperative care. Procedures rendered during the postoperative period and not billed with Modifier 78 are normally denied as included in the global surgical package.
	
	When an assistant surgeon is used during the global period in the same operative session, assistant surgeon rules apply.
	
	Nonreimbursable
	Healthy Blue Dual Advantage does not allow reimbursement for Modifier 78 billed in the following circumstances including, but not limited to:
	• With nonsurgical codes.
	• With codes denoting subsequent, related or redo in the description.

History	• Initial approval and effective date **01/01/20**
References and Research Materials	This policy has been developed through consideration of the following: • CMS • State contract • Optum Learning: Understanding Modifiers, 2014 edition • The Essential RBRVS, 2014 edition
Definitions	• **Modifier 78:** used to indicate that a subsequent procedure was performed during the postoperative period of the original surgical procedure; the subsequent procedure must be related to the original procedure and must require a return trip to the operating or procedure room • **General Reimbursement Policy Definitions.**
Related Policies	• Assistant at Surgery (Modifiers 80/81/82/AS) • Modifier Usage • Multiple and Bilateral Surgery: Professional and Facility Reimbursement
Related Materials	• None