



Weight Management Program

Policy

Clinical

Responsible Parties: Wellness Program Manager

Date Created: 11/01/2018

Date Approved: 11/01/2018

Effective Date: 11/01/2018

Next Review Date: 11/01/2019

1. POLICY

Purpose of Policy: To document coverage and reimbursement criteria related to the PEIA Weight Management Program for its members, their dependents and participating providers.

Background:

West Virginia is among the top states in the incidence of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, metabolic syndrome, and heart disease. PEIA members, like their fellow West Virginians, are experiencing an alarming rate of these debilitating conditions causing an escalation in the agency's obesity related claims.

It is understood that the addition of a weight management benefit cannot singularly address this problem given the "obesogenic" environment in which we live. However, it is our intent to offer a benefit which will assist PEIA members in making the necessary lifestyle changes needed to lessen their risk factors and improve their fitness levels, while working toward a healthy weight.

In July of 2004, PEIA initiated the PEIA Weight Management Pilot Program (now the PEIA Weight Management Program) with a single participating site. This covered benefit is available at over 50 fitness facilities across the state.

The program offers the following services:

- Nutritional counseling services provided by registered and licensed dietitians;
- Fitness services provided by exercise physiologists and certified personal trainers;
- Access to appropriately equipped and staffed facilities
- Monthly monitoring and touching base by program administration

Effective July of 2011, PEIA amended the program eligibility criteria to include a broader spectrum of members who would experience improved health via the nutritional fitness and behavioral services offered by this program.

Effective July of 2013, PEIA enhanced the benefit to allow for a second attempt per lifetime to complete the program.

Effective July 2018, PEIA amended the program in the following ways:

1. Change the start dates for members to the first of the following month once all paperwork is received,
2. Modified the entrance criteria, the compliance standards to remain in the program, the fee schedule, and youth participation in the program.
3. Added required monthly member check-ins with program via email, phone, or text.
4. Moved to all online program applications.

Effective November 2018, PEIA amended the program in the following ways:



Weight Management Program

1. The physician/medical provider approval no longer must be submitted in writing. The member acknowledges that they should obtain medical clearance to participate in the program.

Limitations of Coverage:

Available to PEIA Preferred Provider Benefit (PPB) or COBRA members, this is a twice per lifetime, self-selecting, opt in benefit with a duration of up to two years (twenty-four months) in length. Individuals who cease participation with the program due to medical reasons or pregnancy can resume the program upon medical release. Participants who have ceased their participation for other reasons may resume after a twelve-month waiting period. The second program attempt, available only to those who didn't complete the first attempt, would allow members up to the remaining months of the two-year program. However, if members have completed 18 months in the program, they are ineligible for any further attempt. Changing of facilities is permitted on the second attempt.

Eligibility and Access

Effective July 1, 2018, the PEIA Weight Management Program is made available to individuals who have a Body Mass Index of 30 or greater; OR a waist circumference of 35 inches or more for a woman; or 40 inches or more for a man.

Members are deemed ineligible if:

- They had bariatric or lap band surgery within the past ten years.
- They have exhausted their twice per lifetime limit.
- Their physician or nurse practitioner does not release them to safely participate.
- They completed at least 18 months of attempt one.
- They are under the age of 18

Pregnant women are not eligible for the program due to safety concerns. If they become pregnant while in the program, they will receive a medical drop and can return when no longer pregnant with a medical release, resuming the program at the point where they received the medical drop. The member will have the remainder of the 24 months in the program. If the member completed at least 18 months in the program there will be no return to the program.

If a member has a medical situation or pregnancy which prohibits them from participation in the program, they must notify the facility and PEIA to obtain a medical drop. The member will be in the medical drop for up to 90 days. The member must submit a medical release to PEIA to resume participation in the program at the point where they left off within 90 days. To do this, the member goes online and reapplies for the program through the PEIA website. If a medical drop is necessary beyond 90 days, the member must re-apply for the program and will be considered for



Weight Management Program

a second attempt. If the member has completed at least 18 months of the program prior to the medical drop, the benefit will be exhausted and there will be no further services available. Although PEIA is working to provide statewide program access, it is not yet available in every county or community in West Virginia. Additionally, this is an in-state program only.

Enrollment

Interested PEIA members may enroll by using the web-based enrollment application which may be found on the PEIA website: www.wvpeia.com. For questions on the program members may call 1-866-688-7493. . If the applicant meets criteria and is approved for the program, a packet of materials is sent electronically to be completed and returned to PEIA including: informed consent agreement, physical activity acknowledgement form, , health information survey, healthcare insurance coverage notice, compliance acknowledgement, and welcome letter.

Services Offered

The PEIA Weight Management Program provides nutritional, exercise and behavioral services from recognized professionals within their fields. PEIA has developed a monthly schedule of services and fee schedule which is premised upon individualized assessments and follow ups by the dietitian and exercise physiologists. Personal trainers are to assist the participant with the implementation of their fitness plan. Services are spread throughout the program with encouragement provided to participants to continue attendance for the duration to achieve the best results and a greater likelihood of incorporating new behaviors as a part of their routine.

Member responsibilities

Members are encouraged to CAREFULLY CONSIDER their readiness to participate, since this is a twice-per-lifetime, twenty-four-month, benefit. The program is rigorous and requires a significant time commitment and ability to focus on exercise and nutrition. As a participant, the obligations are as follows:

- To keep all scheduled appointments.
- To provide a minimum of 24 -hour notice prior to any cancellations or agree to pay for a missed appointment.
- To pick one participating facility and not request a transfer unless the member has moved out of the area or there is some other compelling reason. Transfer requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and approval is not guaranteed.
- To exercise at the facility a minimum of twice, preferably three times weekly. Members are required to have **10 visits to the facility per month**, inclusive of both professional visits and workouts. This is considered one of the monthly compliance measures.



Weight Management Program

- To cooperate with the monthly measurements which are to be taken by the staff at the facility. This is considered one of the monthly compliance measures
- To pay the facility copayment when due.
- To keep a food journal to be reviewed by the dietitian and other program staff.
- To notify the monthly staff check-in or PEIA immediately if problems have occurred interfering with participation.
- To work with the professionals in the program to meet the minimum weight loss standards: 2.5% after 3 months in the program, -5% after 6 months in the program, - 10% after 18 months in the program- OR normal BMI & waist circumference ($\leq 25/\leq 35W$, $\leq 25/\leq 40M$). This is considered one of the monthly compliance measures
- To participate and respond in a timely manner to monthly check-in with PEIA staff. The member can elect for the check-in to be via email, phone, or text message. This is considered one of the monthly compliance measures.
- To cease using services if their PEIA Preferred Provider Benefit (PPB) or COBRA insurance coverage has terminated (failure to do so will make the participant liable for all program claims incurred after insurance has lapsed).
- To show courtesy and mutual respect to all program staff and fellow participants. Rude or threatening behavior is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Facility Responsibilities

PEIA Weight Management facilities are recruited by PEIA and its representatives. All participating facilities must agree to:

- To accept the PEIA fee schedule
- To provide required services when due according to the fee schedule. Make-up sessions will not be permitted after July 1, 2018.
- To utilize the required nutrition and exercise professionals for the specified services as delineated by PEIA
- To respect scope of practice guidelines
- To offer reasonably accessible hours of operation
- To utilize PEIA's web-based information system to document participant information in a timely fashion. Staff rely on this information being as up to date as possible
- To collect member copayments when due
- To maintain equipment and the facility to ensure safety and cleanliness
- To have a functioning and easily accessible Automated External Defibrillator at the facility at all times
- To notify PEIA immediately of any change in personnel
- To comply with all requirements of the Healthy Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- To utilize the designated method of claims submission; Documentation for services should be entered in the PEIA web-based system by the 10th of the following month in order to be processed that month.
- PEIA has a six-month timely filing period. Visits and services entered beyond the timely filing limitation will be denied and may not be billed to the member.



Weight Management Program

- Providers may contact Cheryl Jackson with PEIA for billing questions at Cheryl.Jackson@wv.gov.
- To communicate with the PEIA staff as needed regarding participant progress or obstacles
- To provide services in a sensitive, nondiscriminatory manner to all participants.
- To attend PEIA weight management provider training sessions when offered.

Sites which fail to meet guidelines will be dropped from the program. PEIA has the discretion to drop sites or deny applications of new sites as it is an agency-established network and in no way an entitlement program.

Reimbursement

PEIA pays for the services of dietitians, exercise physiologists and certified personal trainers per the agency fee schedule. The member copayment of \$20 per month shall serve as payment for facility access. All participating providers receive a copy of the fee schedule and any relevant updates. Balance billing is prohibited. Since PEIA pays all associated weight management claims directly to the facility for services rendered, it is expected that the facility will remit payment to all contracted or staff providers in a timely fashion. PEIA cannot mediate payment issues between the facility and their staff. However, ongoing problems between the facility and staff may be cause for program discontinuation.

Participants with PEIA Plan C (the high deductible plan) must first meet their deductible before PEIA pays any program claims. Plan C members must also pay their \$20 monthly copay to the facility.

Children and Adolescents

After reviewing historical youth participation in the PEIA Weight Management Program, along with current research and best practices, family support and parental participation seem to be a key factor in the compliance and success of youth. This program is designed for adult weight loss, not pediatric. Beginning July 1, 2018, members must be 18 years or older to be accepted into the PEIA Weight Management Program. Youth currently participating in the program will be permitted to finish the program.

PEIA values the need for an evidence-based program for youth weight loss and prevention. We will be working with West Virginia partners to find an appropriate program to put in place.

To support and encourage youth participation, but not burden youth with the compliance standards, we will work with facilities that are equipped and want to allow youth 16-18 years old to co-participate with a parent in training activities. PEIA Weight Management facilities will declare whether they are "opting in" or "opting out" of youth participation. Facilities that "opt in" to allowing youth to attend and participate in workouts with a parent or guardian may charge the member an additional \$20 copay monthly for the youth access. There will be no reimbursement



Weight Management Program

of services for the youth, only the parent. At no time should the youth be provided professional services (registered dietician, exercise physiologist, or personal trainer) without the parent/guardian present.

In addition, members are referred to review the standalone dietician services benefit in the current summary plan description to decide if that might be an appropriate avenue for the youth.

Compliance checks

PEIA will conduct monthly check-ins and compliance reviews on every member in the program. The checks will involve evaluating member compliance on:

- Attending all professional visits according to fee schedule
- Completing required 10 visits per month to the facility (including professional visits)
- Completion of monthly measurements
- Compliance with weight loss standards of the program at month 4, 7, and 19
- Responding to monthly communication with PEIA

With first episode of non-compliance the member will receive a warning letter . With the second episode of non-compliance the member will be dropped from the program.

Coding and Claim Requirements- all professional visits will be for 4 units or 60 minutes.

Dietitian Services

97802 Medical Nutrition Therapy: initial assessment and intervention; individual, face to face with patient, each 15 minutes.

97803 Medical Nutrition Therapy: reassessment and intervention, individual, face to face with patient, each 15 minutes.

Exercise Physiologists

S9449 Weight Management sessions, non-physician provider, per session, 15 minute increments. PEIA fee allowance is \$15 per unit or \$60 per hour. Provides for individualized assessments and fitness plans.



Weight Management Program

Personal Training Services

S 9451 exercise sessions by non-physician, to be provided by certified personal trainer on an individual basis. This service may also include participant measurements and consultations, \$10.00 per 15-minute increment.

Other Provider Requirements

Providers which have repeatedly been placed “on hold” for new referrals due to the failure to comply with program requirements or due to the provision of substandard services may be permanently terminated from the PEIA network. As referenced earlier, there is no appeal process for this change in status as the PEIA Weight Management network is solely determined by PEIA.

Providers should refrain from marketing additional services to PEIA members as this program is meant to be a comprehensive package which should meet participant needs. Such prohibited marketing includes: additional personal training or other professional services; supplements; DEXA scans, additional classes; orientation sessions; or lab work. (This list is not all inclusive.)

Providers may not charge participants for swipe card fees, lockers, towels or other facility conveniences as the PEIA fee schedule is inclusive of all program costs (except child care) and provides sufficient remuneration for facility overhead.

Forms/Program Materials/Websites

Members may find the online application forms, the program brochure and a list of participating facilities on www.wvpeia.com

Provider resources can be found at
https://peia.wv.gov/wellness_tools/WMP/Pages/WMPResources.aspx

PEIA participating facilities shall document participant documentation in the PEIA Weight Management Face to Face Care Management website: <https://weight.peiaf2f.com>

The PEIA Weight Management toll free line is: 1-866-688-7493 and the email is
Weightmanagement@wv.gov .