

Dental Policy Clarification – Unit of Service

Medicaid has always required that the proper “unit of service” be billed with each CDT code. In the field of dentistry, each CDT code is normally 1 unit of service. Even when a particular CDT code indicates multiple films or multiple surfaces within the description of the procedure (ex. D0272 – bitewings – two films; or D2392 – resin-based composite – two surfaces, posterior), the unit of service is “1” to reflect the single procedure being performed.

There are some exceptions where multiple units of service may be needed: ex. D0230 – intraoral – periapical each additional film; D0240 – intraoral – occlusal film; and D0260 – extraoral – each additional film. **However, when specific services are being performed on different teeth, the unit of service would be “1” for each tooth.** The maximum unit per day applies to the individual procedure, not the totality of procedures performed on the same day. For example, when a D2391 – resin-based composite, one surface, posterior is performed on tooth #15 and another D2391 is performed on tooth #2 on the same day, each line billed should indicate a unit of service of “1” for each individual tooth. There is no prohibition on performing more than one restoration on different teeth on the same day.

Another example would be for D7280 – surgical access of an unerupted tooth. When surgical exposures are performed on both tooth #19 and tooth #2 on the same day, each line billed would reflect a unit of service of “1” for each tooth being surgically exposed. There is no restriction on the number of teeth being surgically exposed on the same day. In each of these instances, the tooth number must also be indicated on each line billed for the specific procedure.

Please note that sealants are an exception. We limit sealants to 8 per year. All 8 could be performed on the same day. Each sealed tooth would be billed separately, indicating which tooth was sealed and showing a unit of “1”, but no more than 8 sealants can be provided on the same day. Doing so would also reach the annual limit.

Please feel free to contact Medicaid at (302) 255-9658 if you have any questions.