Last updated 11/10/2025 by Emily Aungst

Billing and Prior Authorization for Outpatient Genetic Testing at UNC

Direct billing: The reference laboratory directly bills the patient's insurance.
Institutional billing: The reference laboratory bills UNC, then UNC then bills the patient's insurance.

NOTE: Inpatient and sponsored genetic testing do not require prior authorization.

Prior Authorizations

- **Reference laboratories that bill insurance directly:**
  - Prior authorization will be obtained *by the reference lab* for all payors
  - UNC is not involved in this process beyond submitting supporting clinical documentation to reference labs
    - For the reference lab to obtain prior authorization, additional documents may be required (Letters of Medical Necessity (LOMN), Tricare LDT, Cigna Genetic Recommendation, Aetna WES/WGS Precertification Request forms, etc.)

- **UNC McLendon laboratories and reference laboratories that bill institutionally:**
  - Includes all testing performed at UNC laboratories
  - Prior authorization will be performed by UNC Laboratory staff. Laboratory staff will work with providers to obtain necessary documentation to submit requests
    - Test orders must be placed in Epic prior to submitting a prior auth request
    - Supporting clinical documentation and complete notes including documentation of genetic counseling must be available
  - Prior authorization will be initiated after the sample has been received in the laboratory unless the provider contacts the laboratory staff to obtain authorization before a sample is collected.
  - Prior Authorization Denials:
    - Laboratory staff will contact providers about prior authorization denials
    - Staff will provide options for peer-to-peer review if available. Providers will communicate to laboratory staff the outcome of the peer-to-peer review
    - Denials for tests that do not meet criteria for a patient's policy will not allow the option of a peer-to-peer

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Billing

****Please note**** Prior authorization is not a determination of coverage or patient responsibility. Patients are encouraged to contact their insurance plan to determine coverage and patient responsibility. CPT codes can be obtained by contacting laboratory staff.

- **Reference laboratories that bill insurance directly:**
  - Reference laboratories will work with patient insurance and the patient directly regarding coverage and self-pay options

- **UNC in-house laboratories and reference laboratories that bill institutionally:**
  - Patients may receive a bill for a test if their insurance denies coverage
  - Patients should not receive a bill for a test if it is a covered benefit but a prior authorization request has been denied after the sample has been collected

For billing specifics of individual reference laboratories, please see the Reference Laboratory Billing Information document, found on the Referral Testing Services Department intranet page.

Resources

For help with test and/or laboratory selection, please email LabGC@unchealth.unc.edu

For questions regarding…

<table>
<tr><th>Tests performed at…</th><th>Prior authorization</th><th>Insurance coverage, patient OOP and bills</th><th>Test price or CPT codes</th></tr>
<tr><td>UNC McLendon laboratories</td><td rowspan="2">• Julie Huckaby, Quality and Organizational Excellence Leader
p: 984-974-1507
Julie.Huckaby@unch.unc.edu
• Myra Fisher, Quality and Organizational Excellence Analyst
p: 984-215-6540
Myra.Fisher@unch.unc.edu</td><td>• UNC lab genetic counselors
Labgc@unch.unc.edu
• Ryan O’Mara, Laboratory Department Manager
Ryan.omara@unch.unc.edu
• UNC Estimates line:
984-215-6899</td><td>Joanne Rich,
Business Manager
p: 984-974-1508
joanne.rich@unch.unc.edu</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reference labs that bill institutionally</td><td>UNC Estimates line:
984-215-6899</td><td>UNC McLendon Labs Referral Testing,
reftest@unch.unc.edu</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reference labs that bill insurance directly</td><td colspan="3">Labgc@unch.unc.edu</td></tr>
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