



The Eight Ethical Values and Principles of Utilization Review

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Occupational and environmental health professionals have an obligation to:

1. *Promote Clinically Correct, Patient-Centric Decisions*

Acknowledge that effective and medically necessary care decisions that place patient welfare and clinical outcomes in the forefront are a key priority.

2. *Support Evidenced-Based Medical Guidelines and Formularies*

Recognize that high-quality, evidence-based guidelines and formularies can help assure that patients receive appropriate care while avoiding ineffective and/or potentially harmful care.

3. *Require Qualified Peer Reviewers and Administrative Oversight*

Ensure that utilization review (UR) peer reviewers for all denials, modified decisions, and appeal reviews have adequate education, training, specialty board certification, scope of practice, licensure, and experience and meet any regulatory requirements. Avoid conflicts of interest and behave honestly and ethically when requesting authorization or rendering UR peer-review decisions.

4. *Strive for Timely Reviews and Reduction of Administrative Burdens*

Develop and implement policies and procedures to facilitate timely submission of requests for communicating authorization among all parties and rendering of UR peer-review decisions. Avoid unnecessary delays of care for patients and administrative burdens for practices.

5. *Enhance Professional Interaction Between the Provider and Peer Reviewer*

Strive for peer-to-peer conversation when additional information is necessary. Conversations must be collegial and professional with a focus on determining if care is consistent with guidelines while recognizing circumstances with exceptions to guidelines and emphasizing treatment based upon functional outcomes.

6. *Improve Basic Understanding of the UR Process When Performing Peer Review*

Communicate and collaborate effectively with health care providers when performing UR peer review to improve provider knowledge of the UR system and regulatory requirements, as well as evidence-based medicine and guidelines or review criteria.

7. *Maintain Secure, Confidential Information Systems*

Protect confidential patient medical information throughout the entire UR system. Adhere to all applicable laws, regulatory requirements, and ethical standards relevant to communications, transmission, handling, or storage of medical records or protected health information.

8. *Implement Total Quality Improvement*

Commit to ongoing total quality improvement throughout the entire UR system with engagement of all stakeholders and active medical director (MD or DO) oversight. Quality improvement requires assessment of relevant outcomes metrics, comparison to evidence-based medicine and best practice, quality assurance reviews, root cause analysis for quality deficiencies, functional assessment, and implementation of strategies to improve outcomes with monitoring of efficacy of interventions to correct deficiencies.