GUIDELINES
This policy does not certify benefits or authorization of benefits, which is designated by each individual policyholder contract. Paramount applies coding edits to all medical claims through coding logic software to evaluate the accuracy and adherence to accepted national standards. This guideline is solely for explaining correct procedure reporting and does not imply coverage and reimbursement.

DESCRIPTION
An operating microscope is a two-headed magnifying device with a standard position that can be operated by hand or foot. The operating microscope is used during a specialized type of surgery known as microsurgery. Microsurgery involves magnification, microinstrumentation, microsutures, and meticulous techniques to repair or restore tissues. The use of an operating microscope significantly enlarges and enhances the surgeons’ view.

CPT has designated code 69990 as an add-on code to report an operating microscope. 69990 should be reported (without modifier 51 appended) in addition to the code for the primary procedure performed. The operating microscope can be used for the entire surgical procedure or only for certain portions of the surgery; however, it is reimbursed only once per operative session regardless of the number of surgeries performed.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines for payment of CPT code 69990 differ from CPT Manual instructions following CPT code 69990. CMS Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) edits deny separate reimbursement for 69990 even when billed in combination with some of the valid primary procedure codes provided in the CPT guidelines.

The CMS/CCI guidelines are more restrictive because the use of the operating microscope has over time become the standard of care for many surgical procedures. In many cases, CMS has considered the work associated with the use of the operating microscope when calculating the Relative Value Unit (RVU) for the primary surgical procedure code. National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) edits bundle CPT code 69990 into surgical procedures with RVU values inclusive of the operating microscope. Most of these edits do not allow use of NCCI-associated modifiers.

POLICY
The use of an operating microscope for microsurgery (69990) does not require prior authorization, but is eligible for separate reimbursement only when billed with certain procedure codes as listed below.

HMO, PPO, Individual Marketplace, Elite, Advantage
CPT code 69990 is eligible for separate reimbursement only with procedure codes that CMS has designated as eligible with operating microscope.

CPT 69990 will only be allowed with these services:

CPT code 69990 is eligible for reimbursement a maximum of once per operative session (one unit), not per procedure code.

CPT code 69990 is not eligible for reimbursement when billed for the use of other magnifying devices, such as magnifying loupes, special corrective vision magnifying devices, etc.

CODING/BILLING INFORMATION
The appearance of a code in this section does not necessarily indicate coverage. Codes that are covered may have selection criteria that must be met. Payment for supplies may be included in payment for other services rendered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT CODE</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69990</td>
<td>Microsurgical techniques, requiring use of operating microscope (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REVISION HISTORY EXPLANATION
01/01/09: Revised list of codes
07/01/12: Revised list of codes
06/09/15: Policy reviewed and updated to reflect most current clinical evidence per Medical Policy Steering Committee.

REFERENCES/RESOURCES
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS Manual System and other CMS publications and services
Ohio Department of Medicaid http://jfs.ohio.gov/
American Medical Association, Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) and associated publications and services
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System, HCPCS Release and Code Sets
Industry Standard Review
Hayes, Inc.