# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual C-700: Medical Services

Revised April 1, 2019

## C-700: Medical Services and Equipment

Medical services, which are also referred to as "physical restoration," are available to eligible Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) customers through the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) when these services are expected to decrease, help manage, or stabilize physical barriers so that eligible customers can secure, keep, advance in, or return to competitive integrated employment. These services include corrective surgery or physical therapeutic treatment, dentistry, various types of therapy, and other medically related rehabilitation services that are likely, within a reasonable time frame, to correct or substantially modify a stable or slowly progressing physical or mental impairment that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment.

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## C-701: Professional Medical Services

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### C-701-2: Medical Services Required Review and Approvals Policy

Medical, dental, and ophthalmological consultants provide support to VR staff throughout the VR process.

For limitations on consultant services and more information about the roles of various consultants, refer to VRSM B-101-7: Consultants.

#### Medical Director

The following require review and approval by the medical director:

* Medical services with payments exceeding the Maximum Affordable Payment Schedule (MAPS);
* Approval for medical services or devices with unlisted MAPS codes;
* Payment for co-surgeons;
* Actions contrary to the LMC's advice;
* Hiring new consultants; and
* Services, procedures, and programs with special requirements.

VR staff must consult with the VR Manager prior to requesting review and approval by the medical director.

#### State Ophthalmology Consultants

The state ophthalmology consultants are ophthalmologists and retinal specialists and surgeons. Ophthalmological and surgical questions are directed to their attention.

#### State Optometric Consultants

State optometric consultants are optometrists and clinical low-vision specialists. Low-vision, vision therapy, and related optometric questions are directed to their attention.

#### Regional Dental Consultant

A regional dental consultant (RDC) is required for all dental services.

#### Local Medical Consultant

The following require review and consultation by an LMC:

* •Surgical services with the exception of eye surgeries.
* •Procedures requiring local and general anesthesia
* •Services, procedures, and programs with special requirements

Eye surgeries with complex procedures may need more consultation, staff may contact State office program specialist for blind services.

#### Medical Services Procedures

When medical services are being considered, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The vocational rehabilitation counselor (VR counselor) documents in a case note how the customer's substantial impediments to employment will be addressed by the proposed medical services to allow the customer to return to, obtain, maintain, or advance in competitive integrated employment.
2. The VR counselor or the designee submits all required documentation for required reviews and approvals to the appropriate source for review and approval.
3. All required reviews and approvals are documented in RHW before VR commitment to VR sponsorship of a medical service by its inclusion in the IPE or an IPE amendment.
4. After confirming documentation of all required reviews and approvals, medical services must be included in the customer's IPE or IPE amendment.
5. The VR counselor provides counseling and guidance to ensure that the customer understands the recommended treatment and the customer's responsibilities throughout the physical restoration process.

For additional information about the customer's medical condition, treatment options, and potential employment impact, consult the [Medical Disability Guidelines (PDF)](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/vrs/docs/MDG.pdf).

The VR counselor uses the following procedures when authorizing medical services.

1. Review the customer's medical records related to the reported disability.
2. Obtain a written recommendation for planned medical services.
3. Obtain the current procedural terminology codes from the surgeon or physician for the recommended procedures.

If the recommendations include VR-sponsored surgeries or invasive medical procedures requiring general and or local anesthesia, before developing the IPE, VR staff:

1. obtain a completed a [VR3110, Surgery and Treatment Recommendations](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html);
2. has the LMC review the VR3110;
3. has the LMC complete a [VR3101, Medical Consultant Review](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), before creating the IPE for medical services;
4. consult with the VR program specialist for physical restoration for medical services that:
   * are not listed in MAPS;
   * use codes listed as $0; or
   * use codes ending in "99" or the letter "T"; and
5. documents the outcome of the LMC in a case note in RHW.

When dental services require review and approval, the VR counselor completes each of the steps that are listed above and asks the regional dental consultant to complete the [VR3108, Dental Report](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html) form before services are approved.

If the provider requests authorization for services that exceed the MAPS rates, the VR counselor must obtain approval from the state medical director.

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### C-701-9: Professional Surgical Services Policies

#### Surgeon

The surgeon's fee usually includes postoperative office visits for a specified period. The period should be verified for each individual customer and surgery.

A medical complication that results from the surgery directly or is inherent in the condition under treatment is a part of the physical restoration service.

VR uses a multiple surgical procedure discount when calculating the surgeon's fee per MAPS. Refer to the [Medical Services Required Practices Handbook (PDF)](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/vrs/docs/medservhndbk-twc.pdf) for the payment method.

#### Co-Surgeons

Two surgeons may not be paid as co-surgeons on the same case at the same time except when the surgery requires the collaboration of two or more surgical specialties.

For approval of co-surgeons, the VR counselor:

* obtains a separate [VR3110, Surgery and Treatment Recommendations](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html) from each surgeon;
* verifies that the identified surgeons have different specialties required by the proposed surgery;
* verifies that the current procedural terminology (CPT) codes identifying the surgical procedures are different for each surgeon; and
* obtains approval from the state medical director to pay for co-surgeons.

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## C-703: Policies for Services, Procedures, and Programs with Special Requirements

Listed below are physical restoration services or procedures that have special requirements. The VR counselor reviews the requirements throughout this chapter before including any of the services in the customer's individualized plan for employment (IPE) or IPE amendment.

The services are:

* adaptive or assistive technology;
* back surgery and steroid injections;
* bilateral total knee replacement (simultaneous);
* breast implant removal;
* cardiac catheterization or angiography;
* chiropractic treatment;
* cochlear implant;
* comprehensive medical treatment for spinal cord injury;
* dental treatment;
* discograms;
* electrical bone stimulators;
* eyeglasses and contact lenses;
* functional capacity assessments (FCA);
* functional electrical stimulation (FES) devices;
* hearing aids;
* home health and nursing-home care;
* intercurrent illness;
* low-vision aids
* medical assistive devices and supplies;
* nursing-home care;
* occupational therapy;
* orthoses and prostheses (see also FES devices, above);
* osteomyelitis;
* outpatient services;
* pain treatment;
* physical therapy;
* prescription drugs and medical supplies;
* procedures for pregnant customers;
* severe (morbid) obesity surgery;
* post bariatric surgery case management;
* speech therapy and speech training;
* spinal cord stimulator or dorsal column stimulator;
* weight loss programs;
* wheelchairs; and
* wound care.

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### C-703-21: Orthoses and Prostheses

The VR counselor provides an orthosis or prosthesis to enhance a customer's employability or capability to perform activities of daily living that will facilitate employment.

#### Required Medical Examinations for Orthoses and Prostheses

Customers that have ongoing medical conditions that could affect the future ability to successfully use the orthotic or prosthetic device, such as diabetes or cancer (use form VR3112 Cancer Disability Medical Report), will need to have documentation from the appropriate medical provider indicating that the customer is compliant with treatment recommendations and that there is a good prognosis for successful orthotic or prosthetic use and return to employment.

For orthoses, a physician's examination is required before the purchase of an initial orthosis or if there is difficulty using the current orthosis.

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#### Procedure for UTSW Technical Review

To submit a letter of specification for a prosthetic for UTSW review, the VR counselor:

* uses the [UTSW cover sheet](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/vrs/docs/UTSW-Cover-Sheet.docx), follows the instructions, and attaches required information; and
* documents in RHW the need for the required review and the submission date of the cover sheet and required information.

Upon receipt of the UTSW technical review report, the VR counselor shares the report with the prescribing prosthetist.

The VR counselor:

* discusses with the prosthetist the recommended changes to the letter of specification as identified by the UTSW review; and
* requests a revised letter of specification if the prosthetist agrees with the changes.

The VR counselor issues a service authorization for fabrication of the orthosis or prosthesis and verifies receipt before payment.

If an amended letter of specification cannot be negotiated, the prosthetist may submit additional information and the VR counselor may request a UTSW follow-up review of the case. The additional information must be substantive and pertain specifically to the customer. It should not be generic information or the same information provided in the original documents. The VR counselor requests the UTSW follow-up review using the procedure outlined above at an additional cost. Only one UTSW follow-up review is allowed. Questions about the UTSW report should be directed to the Medical Services team.

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### C-703-35: Bilateral Total Knee Replacement (Simultaneous)

Knee replacement surgery may be considered when conservative treatment has failed to resolve an impediment to employment created by pain or loss of function in the knee. Simultaneous bilateral total knee replacement requires the review of the LMC and the approval of the state medical director.