




**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Health Plan Advisory No. 18-02**

DATE: May 24, 2018

TO: Nebraska Heritage Health Plans

FROM: Matthew A. Van Patton, DHA, Director 
Division of Medicaid & Long-Term Care

BY: Heather Leschinsky, Deputy Director
Delivery Systems

RE: Authorization Requirements for Extended Brain and Spinal Cord
Rehabilitation in Specialized Nursing Facilities

This Health Plan Advisory is being issued to provide guidance to Heritage Health Plans on the requirements for authorizing extended skilled rehabilitation in Specialized Nursing Facilities for clients with brain or spinal cord injuries.

Effective immediately, Heritage Health Plans should authorize the following authorization timeframes:

- Based on the pre-admission assessment and per medical necessity, the initial authorization will be given for 30 days to allow for assessment and development of a special needs plan of care;
- After the initial authorization timeframe, concurrent authorizations will be up to 60-day time periods if identified as medically necessary by the plan.

Facility staff continue to be responsible for making a comprehensive assessment of the resident's needs within 14 days of admission, using the most current minimum data set (MDS). Each Heritage Health plan must use the comprehensive plan of care and subsequent interdisciplinary team meetings to determine the client's progress toward the client's established program outcomes, goals, and medical necessity of the stay.

Additionally, if the client is hospitalized during a 15-day bed hold, the health plan must honor the authorization in place during the bed hold time period, and must not require the facility to obtain a new prior authorization upon return to the facility.

This Health Plan Advisory rescinds and replaces Health Plan Advisory 17-09 issued June 23, 2017.

Questions about this advisory can be sent to DHHS.MLTCPhysical@nebraska.gov.
Health plans should also copy their contract manager.