Optum

InterQual Criteria

Comprehensive, evidence-based clinical criteria

The InterQual® Criteria portfolio offers comprehensive clinical decision support designed to strengthen patient outcomes and reinforce appropriate utilization by providing access to evidence-based clinical criteria. Detailed decision support is delivered across the continuum of care through specialized modules organized into four content suites.

InterQual Criteria and Industry Content			
Level of Care	**Behavioral Health**	**Ambulatory Care Planning**	**Industry Content**
Acute Adult*	Adult and Geriatric Psychiatry	Procedures*	The ASAM Criteria®
Acute Pediatric*	Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	Imaging	Concert Genetics
Long-Term Acute Care*	Substance Use Disorders	Durable Medical Equipment*	Medicare Behavioral Health
Inpatient Rehabilitation*	Behavioral Health Services	Molecular Diagnostics	Medicare Procedures*
Subacute and Skilled Nursing*		Specialty Rx Non-Oncology	Medicare Imaging
Home Care		Specialty Rx Oncology	Medicare Post-Acute and Durable Medical Equipment
Outpatient Rehab and Chiropractic		Specialty Referral	Medicare Molecular Diagnostics and Lab
		Retrospective Monitoring	Medicare Pharmacy

* Decision Reasons add-on available

Clinical integrity

The clinical criteria populating each module are updated at least once annually and are produced through a rigorous process grounded in the principles of evidence-based medicine. Criteria development is conducted by a clinical team that includes physicians, registered nurses and allied health professionals. The team relies on systematic, critical appraisal of the medical literature using elements of the Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) approach. Draft criteria are subjected to systematic scrutiny by our InterQual Clinical Review Panel of more than 1,100 independent, multidisciplinary experts.

Customize your criteria

InterQual Customize is a content creation and editing solution that lets you author your own care management guidelines or customize existing InterQual criteria to meet your organization's unique medical and business needs.

Custom policies can be published alongside the InterQual criteria to create a single workflow within your utilization management solution. Cloud-based InterQual delivery platforms give providers seamless access to your customized policies and criteria.

This capability helps reduce the administrative burden for both payers and providers, and it improves collaboration by increasing transparency.

Optum also offers customization services. Clinical and product experts can execute your custom medical policies within your InterQual workflow, providing product expertise and saving your organization time.

Level of Care

InterQual Level of Care Criteria provide health care organizations with the ability to prospectively, concurrently and retrospectively assess clinical appropriateness. Robust clinical detail allows organizations to evaluate severity of illness, comorbidities and complications, as well as the intensity of services being delivered, to determine the most suitable and safest level of care. The criteria also assist in discharge planning and care transitioning across the continuum. Medicare policy notes and a direct link to the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual provide additional information within the medical review workflow to support policy alignment.

Acute Adult

The Acute Adult module helps clinicians evaluate the appropriateness of admission, continued stay and discharge of acute care patients age 18 and older. Criteria are organized by primary condition presented in a single view that incorporates relevant complications, comorbidities, guideline-standard treatments, proactive care management guidance and length-of-stay benchmarks. By addressing the complete needs of each patient, the criteria facilitate movement of patients through the care continuum based on their condition and response to treatment. This integrated, holistic approach provides a powerful mechanism for decreasing inappropriate admissions, avoidable days and readmissions.

Acute Pediatric

The Acute Pediatric module helps clinicians determine the appropriateness of admission, continued stay and discharge at acute care facilities for patients under 18 years of age. The module features the same condition-specific format as the adult criteria.

Long-Term Acute Care

The Long-Term Acute Care module helps clinicians determine the appropriateness of admission, continued stay and discharge for long-term acute care patients. This module includes responder and partial responder criteria to help clinicians adjust patient care time frames and interventions based on outcomes. It also offers guidance around discharge and transition planning for patients who no longer require skilled care or whose care can be safely managed in an outpatient setting or at a lower level of care.

Inpatient Rehabilitation

The Inpatient Rehabilitation module helps clinicians determine appropriateness of admission, continued stay and discharge at inpatient rehabilitation facilities for adult and pediatric populations. The module includes methods for addressing complications and setbacks associated with the onset of medical instability in a timely and medically appropriate way.

Subacute and Skilled Nursing

The Subacute and Skilled Nursing module helps clinicians identify medical necessity and the most suitable level and complexity of care based on clinical need and stability. Guidance also is provided for discharge and transition planning. Clinical evidence supports the appropriateness of skilled treatments and services to support optimal care and to help organizations withstand audit scrutiny.

Home Care

The Home Care module streamlines care management for patients who require services in the home setting. The criteria help determine the appropriateness of the initial review and ongoing service needs, visit recommendations, and discharge. The criteria address both adult and pediatric patients and include intermittent, skilled home care services, private-duty nursing, hospice and palliative care needs.

Outpatient Rehabilitation and Chiropractic

The Outpatient Rehabilitation and Chiropractic module illuminates the most suitable level and complexity of rehabilitation and chiropractic care in addition to maintenance therapy and habilitation. The criteria help clinicians screen for the initial authorization and ongoing care needs and also provide guidance around discharge and transition planning to help avoid costly readmissions. Coordination in the outpatient rehab and chiropractic setting can help improve outcomes, minimize costs and ensure timely transitions to appropriate levels of care.

Behavioral Health

InterQual Behavioral Health Criteria are specifically developed to help payers and providers optimize behavioral health care decisions. Much of the criteria are organized in our continuum format, which presents all settings of care in one view and incorporates the episode-day/ episode-week feature to provide timeline guidance for each patient and condition. Medicare policy notes and a direct link to the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual provide additional information within the medical review workflow to support policy alignment.

Adult and Geriatric Psychiatry

The Adult and Geriatric Psychiatry module supports initial and continued stay decisions across the behavioral health continuum for patients or members age 18 and older. The criteria allow care managers to consider symptoms, functional status, the quality of support systems and safety as determinants for the most appropriate setting of care.

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Designed for patients ages 4 through 17, the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry module helps care managers optimize initial and continued-stay level of care behavioral health decisions. The module's continuum format lets clinicians address multiple symptoms simultaneously to provide a comprehensive picture of the patient's condition.

Substance Use Disorders

The Substance Use Disorders module helps clinicians plan and deliver appropriate substance use care for patients and members age 12 and older. The criteria allow for greater transparency and alignment among stakeholders within and across organizations.

Behavioral Health Services

The Behavioral Health Services module supports medical necessity determinations and documentation for behavioral health procedures, including applied behavioral analysis, psychological testing, electroconvulsive therapy, neuropsychological testing and vagus nerve stimulation, as well as other medications, tests, programs and procedures. The module is aligned with our Ambulatory Care Planning Criteria and is presented in the same QandA format.

Ambulatory Care Planning

InterQual Ambulatory Care Planning Criteria feature extensive informational notes and references that support clinical recommendations and provide guidance to the reviewer. The suite's intuitive QandA format supports efficient review workflows. When appropriate, evidence-based recommendations are suggested based on the clinical scenario presented.

Procedures

The Procedures module covers more than 500 high-volume, high-cost procedures and includes all major body-system categories for both adults and children. Utilizing a proprietary setting benchmark, the criteria recommend whether the procedure or surgery should be performed in an inpatient or outpatient setting. They also indicate whether appropriate, less-invasive interventions have been attempted prior to a surgical or more invasive procedure. Length-of-stay data is provided as benchmarks for select procedures.

Imaging

The Imaging module covers more than 200 unique imaging tests organized into more than 30 test families, including a full spectrum of high-volume, high-cost tests. Cases in which the evidence does not fully support a specific test and therefore may require a secondary review are identified, as are cases where alternative studies are appropriate based on medical evidence and the specific clinical scenario.

Durable Medical Equipment	The Durable Medical Equipment module supports the medical necessity documentation required for authorization of more than 450 pieces of equipment and accessories. The criteria address commercial adult and pediatric populations. Equipment is presented in a hierarchy of cost and complexity, and guidance is provided within a single review workflow for accessories often included with high-volume equipment.
Molecular Diagnostics	The Molecular Diagnostics module provides criteria that cover more than 800 molecular and genetic diagnostic tests organized into more than 130 test families. Newly developed and complex diagnostic tests and test panels also are presented. The criteria include guidance for lower-cost, nonmolecular tests that may be clinically appropriate. Clinical Evidence Summaries provide extensive support.
Specialty Rx Oncology	The Specialty Rx Oncology module helps guide the appropriate use of oncology drugs for both on-label and off-label indications. The criteria includes evidence-supported regimens that indicate when it is appropriate to give a drug in combination with one or more additional medications. Significantly, the Specialty Rx Oncology module is an automated source for National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN®) recommendations on appropriate use of off-label prescription drugs and biologics in patients with cancer.
Specialty Rx Non-Oncology	The Specialty Rx Non-Oncology module helps guide the appropriate use of non-oncology drugs, providing clear guidance on step therapy and addressing both on-label and off-label indications. The criteria cover more than 140 drugs for many common conditions. These criteria are updated at a minimum of twice annually.
Specialty Referral	The Specialty Referral module provides information on which type of specialist should be consulted and includes objective clinical criteria for interventions that should be completed prior to specialist engagement. In addition to specialist type, guidance is available on typical duration and sequencing of involvement for the more than 160 conditions or disorders.
Retrospective Monitoring	The Retrospective Monitoring module supports retrospective assessments of more than 260 surgical and nonsurgical invasive procedures to identify opportunities for care delivery improvement. Robust reporting helps determine if procedures were medically appropriate and if correct interventions were conducted prior to the surgery or procedure. When problems are identified, the module helps organizations determine if the issue was an isolated event or part of a larger pattern.

Industry Content Navigator	Industry Content Navigator provides access to third-party content in your familiar InterQual workflow to improve review efficiency and consistency. Policies that are cumbersome to navigate or that are stored in disparate sources are streamlined and structured in our easy-to-use QandA format.
Medicare Content	The Medicare Content suite provides comprehensive content aligned with Medicare National and Local Coverage Determinations (NCDs/LCDs) and policy articles. The review process is streamlined and presented in an easy-to-use, QandA format, improving efficiency and consistency in determining the appropriateness for tests, procedures and interventions. The Medicare criteria suite includes Medicare Post-Acute and Durable Medical Equipment Medicare Procedures, Medicare Imaging, Medicare Molecular Diagnostics and Lab, Medicare Pharmacy, and Medicare Behavioral Health.
The ASAM Criteria®	Developed through an exclusive partnership with the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), this provides an easy-to-use, interactive version of their criteria. The criteria are incorporated seamlessly into the existing InterQual workflow to help reduce review times, support review consistency and streamline the prior authorization process.
Concert Genetics	Increase consistency and streamline the medical review process for genetic testing with Concert Genetics coverage criteria and comprehensive GTU™ test identification system.

Learn how InterQual Criteria can help you determine and reach your organization's goals.

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