

Optometry C&P workgroup conference call minutes
10/15/2014

- 1) <http://vaww.demo.va.gov/index.asp> (Office of Disability & Medical Assessment (DMA) website on **VA Intranet**) – revised recently and more user friendly. Visit it, as well as the intranet VA optometry administrative page http://vaww1.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/Administrative_Page.asp for valuable resources for C&P examinations.

- 2) Please see DMA Revised Coding Fact Sheet:
<http://vaww.demo.va.gov/files/FactSheets/2014/FactSheetDMA14-006-REVISED-Corrected.pdf>
 - Of note: C&P exam diagnosis code is v70.3; IDES exam diagnosis code is v68.01
 - Of note: be sure to code the CPT/procedure code: 99456 for all disability exams to assure that you get the correct workload credit

- 3) VBMS – remember that there are a few tricks to narrowing down your file reviews. You can Keyword search “STR” to only see the service treatment records.
http://vaww.demo.va.gov/files/VBMS_Trifold_VBMS_for_VHA_103113_v_5_1.pdf

- 4) If you run across journal articles which can help with justification for opinions regarding certain conditions please let us know so we can disperse them to the group. Thanks to Dr. Barbara Hetrick in Walla Walla for sending the following article which dose show there can be a link for cortical and PSC cataracts to diabetes. Remember though that every patient should be assessed on a case by case basis to determine if you feel that they clinically may have cataracts that could be contributed to diabetic complications.

Meta-analysis of the risk of cataract in type 2 diabetes
L Li, X Wan, G Zhao - BMC ophthalmology, 2014

- 5) Humphrey/Goldmann VF Testing – it is important to know that the raters use a visual field calculator to determine disability which was created based on the Goldmann visual field “extent of field” in each meridian tested. The simulated Goldmann visual field on the Humphrey and Octopus are not capable of reaching out to the same extent in all meridians. For instance the Goldmann can go to 85 degrees but the Humphrey will only go to 70 degrees. So if a person saw the stimulus presented at the farthest point of 70 degrees on the Humphrey – they would still be marked as having a constriction if the rater plugs in the values from the “numerical values” printout into their calculator. In saying all of this – it is very important that even if you mark that the field was normal in the DBQ check boxes, that you also, in the comments or remarks section of the DBQ, write that there is no visual field defect related to [claimed] condition, or that the patient was a poor test taker, or whatever your reason for stating that the visual field results are or are not related to the claim.

- 6) The VBA is constantly updating DBQs and we had previously sent in some suggested changes to the current DBQ for eye last year. If you have any suggestions for ways to make the document more user friendly for us, the clinician, please let Brian and Makesha know so we can pass those along to the VBA. For instance some suggestions have been to put drop boxes with common conditions/ICD-9 codes, etc in section I. Move the options for severely decreased acuity (HM, LP, etc) from section III #4 to be included in or just below the visual acuity measurements in section III #1.
- 7) Concerns/Issues regarding VA RO Claim Requests: Brian had an example of a clarification where he was asked for a Goldmann VF on a veteran that had a previous C & P eye exam with a history of Pigment Dispersion but no Glaucoma. While many of these clarification requests are handled daily between the examining doctor and the rater, if there are recurring requests that you are being asked to clarify, it is important for us to communicate that to VBA so they can educate their raters on when visual fields are indicated, when certain conditions have no possible relation to on another, etc. so we are not asked to do unnecessary testing/exams.
- 8) Southwest Asia – currently there are no ocular diseases noted on the list for related conditions to service in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations. We sometimes get requests asking if any conditions are related to Southwest Asia/Gulf War. So it appears that the answer will be “no” in the majority of cases. The following link on the VBA website explains what is related to Southwest Asia.
<http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/claims-postservice-gulfwar.asp>
- 9) Meetings for 2015 will be quarterly on the following dates at 3:00pm eastern time so if you need to plan your schedule around these, you will have time to adjust it prior to those dates.

1/21/2015
4/15/2015
7/15/2015
10/21/2015
- 10) We are still in the process of formulating a document with “common opinion” items and responses and justifications. If you have anything you would like to share/add to this document please send it to Makesha.
- 11) Thank you all for participating in the workgroup calls and please let Makesha and/or Brian know of you have any suggested agenda items or topics for discussion.

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