

TO: All Primary Care Physicians

FROM: Dr. Daniel Cottam
Dr. Chris Richards

RE: Supervised Weight Loss Trials

Thank you for helping our mutual patients as they undergo the insurance mandated requirement of a supervised weight loss trial prior to bariatric surgery. This is usually a six to seven month process which involves several items which must be included on the patient's office visit note.

First, the office note must include the patient's height, weight, and body mass index. The number of pounds lost or gained should be noted. A comment should be included if there is failure to lose weight or a weight gain is recorded.

Second, there must be documentation of a low calorie diet with the number of calories listed on the office encounter form (ex. 1,000-1,200 calories per day).

Third, the type and duration of exercise the patient is attempting must be recorded (ex. Walking 30 minutes per day; swimming 10 laps in pool; stretching for 20 minutes as patient is wheelchair bound, etc).

Fourth, behavior medication must be attempted and documented (ex. Parking further away from store; putting fork down between bites, chewing each bite 20 times before swallowing; using stairs instead of elevator; walking instead of taking the shuttle bus, etc).

Finally, your comments on the patient's progress and further instructions should be included on the office visit note. Previously, our office provided a form for the supervised weight loss trial. However, we are finding that the insurance companies are still requiring the office note be attached. Because of this, our forms should no longer be used as they are redundant when office notes are still required.

Again, thanks so much for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Jill G., Insurance Specialist by telephone: (801) 746-2885.

Sincerely,

Daniel Cottam, MD
Chris Richards, MD
Salt Lake City Regional Medical Center