



Policy and Procedure No: UM 27.6		Revision No: 6
Division: Care Management		
Department: Utilization Management		
Title: PHC-CA Inter-rater Reliability		
Effective Date: 7/13/2011		
Supersedes Policy No: 93035, UM 27.0, UM 27.1, UM 27.2, UM 27.3, UM 27.4, UM 27.5		
Reviewed/Revised by: Tiffany Jarrett		Review/Revision Date: 10/1/2025
Approving Committee: Utilization Management Committee		Date: 12/15/2025
Executive Oversight Committee Date: 12/16/2025		

Purpose:

To outline PHC California’s (the Health Plan) process to conduct, evaluate and report results of Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) assessment. IRR testing is used to assess the knowledge and consistent application of approved guidelines and medical necessity criteria by the Utilization Management review staff and Medical Directors. IRR is used to:

- Minimize variation in the application of clinical guidelines;
- Evaluate staff ability to identify potentially avoidable utilization and quality-of-care issues;
- Prioritize specific areas most in need of improvement;
- Target staff needing additional training

Policy:

The Health Plan administers inter-rater reliability (IRR) evaluations at least annually, to measure the consistency in the application of guidelines, policies, or criteria performed by licensed Utilization Management review staff and Medical Directors when making medically necessary determinations for requested services. The goal of this testing is to ensure staff consistently and accurately apply the evidence-based clinical review criteria and are appropriately referring to the Medical Directors on cases not meeting the criteria or when other concerns, such as quality issues, surface. The targeted scores are as follows:

1. Accuracy: 80% or greater (scored as a group and for each individual taking the test)
2. Reliability: 80% (scored as a group and for each individual taking the test)

Procedure:

1. The National Director of Quality Management or designee develops and administers the test to Utilization and Care Management clinical team and to the Staff Medical Directors. Analysis is completed, tests scored, and data trended. Inter-rater reliability test is based on InterQual determination criteria.
2. Inter-rater reliability tests are administered annually to the following groups:

- Physician Reviewers
 - Utilization Review Nurses
3. Individuals failing to meet an accuracy score of 80% with trend data indicating an individual need versus a group problem receive focused education to correct deficiencies. Individuals scoring less than 80% accuracy for two consecutive testing cycles are placed on a performance improvement plan by their respective supervisor or manager.
 4. Groups failing to meet an accuracy score of 80% with trend data indicating the need for group training receive focused education at the group level to correct deficiencies.
 5. Training is developed and conducted based on trends identified by test results. Training may be individual, or group focused.
 - When trending indicates a need for group focused training it is coordinated and implemented by the National Director of Utilization Management.
 - Follow-up inter-rater testing is performed to ensure that learners grasp key concepts.

Definitions:

N/A

Monitoring:

The IRR results are presented to the Utilization Management Committee annually.

This policy is updated as often as necessary and reviewed and approved at least annually by the Utilization Management Committee.

Reference(s):

N/A

