

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

Executive Summary:

This medical coverage policy focuses on the use of genomic sequencing, specifically exome sequencing (ES) and genome sequencing (GS), for individuals with rare genetic conditions. Rare diseases affect approximately 1 in 10 Americans, and many of these conditions have genetic origins. ES/GS are powerful diagnostic tools for individuals with rare genetic conditions, offering higher diagnostic yields, improved clinical management, and potential cost savings. ES/GS is considered medically necessary for individuals who meet specific criteria, including when the underlying genetic cause is unknown and other possible causes have been ruled out. ES/GS can provide valuable information for people with various conditions, such as birth defects, developmental disorders, seizures (epilepsy), hearing loss, and inherited metabolic disorders. GS is preferred over ES due to its technical advantages. Including samples from the individual and both parents (i.e., trio testing) can increase the chance of reaching a diagnosis. The policy emphasizes the importance of pre- and post-test counseling by certified genetic counselors.

Criteria:

Exome Sequencing or Genome Sequencing:

Exome sequencing or genome sequencing (ES/GS) is considered medically necessary when **ALL** of the following criteria are met:

- 1) The etiology of the patient's features is not known, and a genetic etiology is considered a likely explanation for the phenotype, based on ONE of the following, AND
 - a) Epilepsy of unexplained etiology with onset at any age, OR
 - b) Confirmed bilateral sensorineural hearing loss of unknown etiology and panel testing is unrevealing, OR
 - c) Intellectual disability, following formal assessment by a developmental pediatrician or neurologist, defined as moderate/severe/profound by Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) criteria, diagnosed by 18 years of age, OR
 - d) Global developmental delay, following formal assessment by a developmental pediatrician or neurologist, defined as significant delay in younger children, under age five years, in at least two of the major developmental domains: gross or fine motor; speech and language; cognition; social and personal development; and activities of daily living, OR
 - e) Multiple congenital anomalies (functional and/or structural) affecting unrelated organ systems, OR
 - f) Findings suggestive of inborn error of immunity (e.g., infections requiring hospitalizations and/or IV antibiotics)
 - g) At least TWO of the following criteria are met, OR
 - i) abnormality affecting at minimum a single organ system
 - ii) autism
 - iii) severe neuropsychiatric condition (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, Tourette syndrome, self-injurious behavior, reverse sleep-wake cycles)
 - iv) symptoms of a complex neurological condition (e.g., dystonia, hemiplegia, spasticity, hypotonia, myopathy, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy)
 - v) family history strongly suggestive of a genetic etiology, including consanguinity
 - vi) period of unexplained developmental regression (unrelated to epilepsy or autism)
 - vii) laboratory findings suggestive of an inherited metabolic disorder
- 2) Alternate etiologies have been considered and ruled out, when possible (e.g., environmental exposure, injury, infection, isolated prematurity), AND
- 3) Clinical presentation does not fit a well-described syndrome for which more targeted testing is available.

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

Other Considerations:

- While ES and GS are similar diagnostic tools in the evaluation of individuals with rare disease, there are clear technical advantages of GS that support increased diagnostic yield and efficiencies. As such, if given a choice, GS is the preferred diagnostic test in individuals who meet the above criteria.
- GS is preferred when a mitochondrial disorder is suspected, due to analysis of both the nuclear and mitochondrial genome.
- ES/GS is appropriate as a first-tier genetic test instead of CMA or targeted testing for individuals with epilepsy, congenital anomalies, and/or ID/GDD based on clinical practice guidelines and peer-reviewed evidence. ES/GS may also be an appropriate first-tier test for other indications based on clinician judgement and current clinical practice.
- Pre- and post-test counseling by an appropriate provider, such as an American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics or American Board of Genetic Counseling-certified Genetic Counselor, is strongly recommended.
- The patient and the patient's family history have been evaluated by a board-certified/board-eligible specialist with expertise in the conditions and genes for which testing is being considered, such as a geneticist, neurologist, developmental pediatrician, or immunologist. Restricting the policy to a geneticist-only requirement creates significant access barriers.
- Trio samples are preferred for ES/GS. Use of family trio samples in genomic sequencing analysis helps reduce the time to diagnosis, the rate of uncertain findings, and improves the clinical sensitivity and efficiency regarding the interpretation of clinically novel genes, and increases the diagnostic yield of ES/GS.
- Re-analysis of previously obtained exome or genome sequence has the potential for additional diagnostic yield because of expanding variant databases, as well as periodic novel gene discovery and publication. Re-analysis could be considered prior to additional genomic sequencing, particularly if there has been an onset or identification of additional symptoms that broadens the clinical phenotype assessed during the original ES/GS analysis, and/or there has been a change in the family history that expands the clinical picture, such as the birth or diagnosis of a similarly affected first-degree relative.
- ES/GS in the setting of prenatal genetic diagnosis or screening is not addressed in this policy.
- Ideal sample type should be considered based on the clinical presentation (e.g., mosaicism is suspected based on pigmentary anomalies, consider skin fibroblast as ideal sample type).
- Rapid genome sequencing (rGS), defined as return of preliminary positive results in <7 days and final report in <14 days, may be indicated for acutely ill individuals. Criteria for rGS testing can be found in the [Rapid Genome Sequencing Policy](#).

Background:

Approximately 1 in 10 Americans, an estimated 30 million individuals, are affected by rare disease. It is estimated that 71.9% of rare diseases have identified genetic origins.¹ The average time to get an accurate diagnosis is approximately 4 to 5 years, but may take over 10 years.² The diagnostic evaluation of an individual suspected of having a rare genetic condition may include combinations of radiographic, biochemical, electrophysiologic, and genetic testing. Genetic testing strategies include targeted approaches, such as single-gene analysis, and/or a targeted gene panel, chromosomal microarrays, as well as broad genomic sequencing, including exome sequencing (ES) and genome sequencing (GS). ES/GS are particularly useful for evaluating genetic conditions that demonstrate a high degree of genetic heterogeneity. When compared to serial genetic testing strategies, ES/GS are superior due to broader coverage, reduced cost and improved efficiencies.³⁻⁹

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

Identifying a molecularly confirmed diagnosis in a timely manner for an individual with a rare genetic condition can have a variety of health outcomes including but not limited to:¹⁰⁻¹⁶

- guiding prognosis and improving clinical decision-making via
 - application of specific treatments, as well as withholding of contraindicated treatments for certain rare genetic conditions
 - planning or avoidance of surgical interventions
 - surveillance for comorbidities
 - initiation of palliative care
 - withdrawal of care
- reducing the psychological and financial impact of diagnostic uncertainty and the diagnostic odyssey (e.g., eliminating lower yield testing and additional screening testing that may later be proven unnecessary once a diagnosis is achieved)
- informing genetic counseling for other living relatives (i.e., siblings), as well as recurrence risk counseling and prenatal diagnosis options for the family

Technical Information:

Genomic sequencing technologies currently utilized in clinical practice include exome sequencing and genome sequencing. ES and GS are similar diagnostic tools in the evaluation of individuals with rare disease, but there are clear technical advantages of GS that support increased diagnostic yield and efficiencies as outlined below. As such, GS will likely supplant ES to become the preferred diagnostic test, particularly as access to GS increases.²

Exome sequencing (ES) is a capture-based method that targets the DNA sequence of coding regions (exons) and flanking intronic regions of 1% of the genome. ES is associated with technical and analytical variability, including uneven sequencing coverage and gaps in exon capture before sequencing. In contrast, genome sequencing (GS) involves shearing and sequencing all intergenic and intragenic regions, eliminating the need for a capture step, which increases efficiency and minimizes PCR-based artifacts. Both ES and GS can identify the following categories of pathogenic variants: missense, nonsense, splice-site, and small deletions or insertions. GS is advantageous as a diagnostic tool due to uniformity of coverage, including GC-rich regions, as well as the ability to detect variants that may be missed by ES, such as some copy-number variants (CNV), mid-size insertions and deletions (ca. 10-500 bp), nucleotide repeat expansion mutations, deeper intronic mutations, structural variants (e.g., translocations, inversions), variants in the mitochondrial genome, and variants that result in methylation defects and uniparental disomy.¹⁷⁻²¹

Several studies have compared ES to GS and demonstrate improved diagnostic yield with GS. Lionel et al examined a cohort of participants (N=70) who received both GS and ES.⁶ In this cohort, GS had a diagnostic yield of 50% compared to 37% for ES. GS detected all diagnostic variants found by ES in addition to revealing several diagnostic variants not apparent in ES data. Examples of variants “missed” by ES included deep intronic SNVs, small CNVs, and SNVs in noncoding RNA.

In addition, GS has shown incremental diagnostic yield in individuals with non-diagnostic ES. In a cohort of heavily pre-investigated patients, GS was able to provide a diagnosis in 13% of patients in whom ES results were inconclusive.²² Another study of 50 patients with severe intellectual disability and non-diagnostic CMA ES demonstrated that GS had a diagnostic yield of 42%.¹⁷ Bertoli-Avella et al showed that up to 29.6% of ES negative cases could benefit from GS testing (14.5% with pathogenic or likely pathogenic results, and 15.1% with VUS).²³ The majority of genetic diagnoses made by GS in ES negative cases could be attributed to its superior technical performance; GS detected 79 noncoding variants, 41 of which were classified as pathogenic/likely

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

pathogenic. The diagnostic yield of GS in a cohort of 822 families who had previously undergone genetic testing was 8%, including several types of pathogenic variants that were undetectable by previous ES and other techniques.²⁴

The use of family trio samples in genomic sequencing analysis helps reduce the time to diagnosis, the rate of uncertain findings, and improves the clinical sensitivity and efficiency with regard to the interpretation of clinically novel genes, and increases the diagnostic yield of ES/GS.²⁵ As part of a meta-analysis, five studies that conducted within-cohort comparisons of diagnostic utility of singleton and trio ES/GS found the pooled odds of diagnosis for trios was twice that of singletons ($P < 0.0001$).²⁶

Periodic reanalysis of previously obtained exome or genome sequence has the potential for additional diagnostic yield because of expanding variant databases, as well as periodic novel gene discovery and publication.^{20,27-29} A review of twenty-seven peer-reviewed articles revealed a median new diagnosis rate via reanalysis of 15% and median reanalysis timeframe of 22 months.²⁹ The authors suggest that an interval of greater than 18 months from the original report may be optimal for reanalysis. The majority of new diagnoses from re-analysis of ES result from newly discovered genes, with additional diagnostic yield from expanded phenotypic spectrum and upgraded classification of variants in previously known genes.³⁰ Reanalysis can be improved by thorough clinical reassessment and systematic reevaluation of the patient by the ordering provider.³¹

Guidelines and Evidence:

The American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) has several relevant policy statements that offer guidance on: the clinical application of ES/GS,^{9,32} informed consent for ES/GS,³³ technical standards to ensure quality results and the interpretation and reporting of variants,³⁴ reporting of secondary findings in clinical ES/GS,^{35,36} and re-analysis.³⁷

A statement from the ACMG includes the following indications for diagnostic testing using ES/GS in assessment of phenotypically affected individuals when:³²

- “a. The phenotype or family history data strongly implicate a genetic etiology, but the phenotype does not correspond with a specific disorder for which a genetic test targeting a specific gene is available on a clinical basis.”
- “b. A patient presents with a defined genetic disorder that demonstrates a high degree of genetic heterogeneity, making WES or WGS analysis of multiple genes simultaneously a more practical approach.”
- “c. A patient presents with a likely genetic disorder, but specific genetic tests available for that phenotype have failed to arrive at a diagnosis.”
- “d. A fetus with a likely genetic disorder in which specific genetic tests, including targeted sequencing tests, available for that phenotype have failed to arrive at a diagnosis.”

The ACMG issued an evidence-based clinical practice guideline for the use of exome sequencing and genome sequencing (ES/GS) in 2021.⁹ The guideline supports the clinical utility of ES/GS as a first- or second-tier test for individuals with one or more congenital anomalies with onset prior to age 1 year, or developmental delay, or intellectual disability with onset prior to 18 years. ES/GS has a higher diagnostic yield compared with standard genetic testing and may be more cost-effective when ordered earlier in the diagnostic evaluation.

In 2021, the ACMG Secondary Findings Working Group published an updated policy statement with recommendations for reporting of secondary findings in clinical ES and GS.³⁵ This policy statement provides guidance on consenting, scope of secondary finding reporting based on test type, and proposes a framework for

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

annual updates to the secondary findings list. The goal of the secondary findings gene list is to provide updated guidance to clinical laboratories on which medically actionable genes unrelated to the indication for testing should be evaluated as part of clinical ES/GS.³⁶ Included in this list are several genes associated with heritable cardiovascular disease. The American Heart Association published a consensus statement to guide clinicians regarding counseling for incidentally identified genetic variants in monogenic cardiovascular disease genes and to assist them in the interpretation and clinical application of variants.³⁸

Recommendations for obtaining informed consent for clinical ES/GS, including secondary findings, have also been outlined by the ACMG.³³ A medical geneticist or genetic counselor should perform pre-test counseling and consent documentation.

The ACMG Laboratory Quality Assurance Committee issued points to consider in the reevaluation and reanalysis of genomic test results,³⁷ including general considerations, considerations for variant-level reevaluation and case-level reanalysis, and reporting. This statement also suggests considerations for reanalysis versus retesting using new methodologies, including:

- Time elapsed since the previous testing occurred
- Improvements in technology/chemistry (e.g., new methods for DNA capture and sequencing)
- Bioinformatics advancements
- New information regarding the genetic etiology of a condition
- Additional patient phenotypes or family history that developed in the interim

ES/GS are powerful diagnostic tools for individuals with rare genetic conditions in which the specific genetic etiology is unclear or unidentified by standard clinical evaluation. While the diagnostic yield of ES/GS varies depending upon the individual's age, phenotype, previous workup, and inclusion of comparators, the efficacy is well established. Further, the diagnostic yield of ES/GS is higher when used earlier in the diagnostic work-up.³⁹ A review of publications from 2009-2017 revealed median diagnostic yield of ES/GS in aggregate analyses was 33.2%, but varied by broad clinical categories and test type.¹² The 100,000 Genomes Project demonstrated that GS had an overall diagnostic yield of 25% in 2183 probands—many of whom were heavily pre-tested.⁴⁰ Notably, diagnostic yields for intellectual disability, hearing disorders, and vision disorders ranged from 40 to 55%; diagnostic yield for individuals with dysmorphic or congenital anomalies was 21%. Based on the results, the National Health Service implemented GS as the first-tier test for 25+ different clinical conditions. Use of GS/ES also reveals dual molecular diagnoses that contribute to complex phenotypes (i.e., two significant findings associated with non-overlapping clinical presentations).¹⁰

Evidence for the clinical utility of ES/GS in individuals suspected of having rare genetic disease includes numerous retrospective and prospective case series, and randomized controlled trials. Relevant outcomes include improved clinical decision-making (e.g., initiation of specific treatments, withholding of contraindicated treatments, changes to surveillance, changes in reproductive decision making, and resource utilization).^{22,41,42} An impact on medical management has been clearly demonstrated in both rapid ES/GS and non-rapid ES/GS cohorts.

A meta-analysis of relevant articles published between 2011 and 2021 compared the diagnostic rate and clinical utility of ES and GS across pediatric and adult populations, as well as the number of variants of uncertain significance (VUS) and health economic outcomes associated with these technologies.⁴³ Based on nine studies that compared ES and GS within the cohorts, the odds of a diagnosis by GS was 1.2 times greater than that of ES. Pooled clinical utility of GS (61%) was higher than that of ES (48%) and the rate of VUS by ES and GS did not differ significantly.

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

ES/GS has been shown to positively impact healthcare utilization through cost-savings compared to serial genetic testing strategies.^{7,29,39} Several health economic studies have been published that demonstrate that GS is the most efficient approach to the diagnosis of children with rare and undiagnosed genetic conditions compared to previous standard of care.^{7,43,44} If GS is unavailable, ES represents the next most efficient option compared with standard of care. Other strategies provided the same or fewer diagnoses at a higher incremental cost per diagnosis.

Genetic counselors play a critical role in guiding testing strategy and assessing the utility of genetic testing in individuals with rare disease, as well as supporting informed consent. Practice guidelines outline the role of genetic counselors in consent and result disclosure/interpretation for ES/GS.³³ Genetic counselors are trained to assess appropriate testing strategies and prevent order errors.^{45,46} Genetic counselors can bridge access gap between medical geneticists and other specialists, ensuring appropriate utilization of genomic sequencing in individuals with rare disease.^{45,46}

Congenital Anomalies

Many congenital anomalies have an underlying genetic etiology, and may occur in isolation, or in conjunction with other features. ES/GS have demonstrated diagnostic utility in individuals with multiple congenital anomalies, particularly when ordered early in the diagnostic evaluation.^{39,41} The ACMG evidence-based clinical practice guideline supports the use of ES/GS as a first- or second-tier test for individuals with one or more congenital anomalies with onset prior to age 1 year.⁹ Clinical utility includes short-term active clinical management changes (modifications to medications, procedures, or treatment) and long-term clinical management (referral to specialists and surveillance for disease-related conditions, or lifestyle changes).

Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Neurodevelopmental disorders, including global developmental delay, intellectual disability, and/or autism spectrum disorder, are a heterogeneous group of conditions that impact brain development and affect various aspects of daily functioning. A meta-analysis investigating the diagnostic yield of ES in neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD) showed that ES outperformed chromosomal microarray, with an overall diagnostic yield of 36% (31% for isolated NDD, and 53% for NDD plus associated conditions).⁴⁷ In another study of 100 individuals with intellectual disability, use of GS as a first-line genetic test yielded a diagnostic rate of 27%, more than doubled compared to clinical microarray (12%), including identification of structural variants, single nucleotide variants, uniparental disomy, and short tandem repeats.⁴⁸ The ACMG evidence-based clinical practice guideline supports the use of ES/GS as a first- or second-tier test for individuals with developmental delay (DD) or intellectual disability (ID) with onset prior to age 18 years.⁹ Isolated autism without ID or congenital malformation was formally out of scope for the practice guideline, but evaluation of ES/GS in this population is ongoing.⁴⁹

Cerebral Palsy

Another neurodevelopmental disorder, cerebral palsy (CP), is a group of disorders impacting the ability to move and maintain balance.^{50,51} Historically cerebral palsy has been attributed to birth related issues, such as asphyxia and birth trauma, however, more recently a substantial portion of individuals with CP have been identified to have an underlying genetic condition in one of the ~300 genes currently associated with CP.^{50,52,53} Genomic sequencing studies have demonstrated a diagnostic yield of about 20-35% in individuals with known or suspected CP.⁵⁰⁻⁵⁴ This yield is similar to other neurodevelopmental disorders in which guidelines or consensus statements recommend genomic sequencing.^{9,47} Additionally, for individuals with CP and an identified genetic diagnosis 37-93% have a clinical impact including medication intervention, medical surveillance, and reproductive management.^{50,51}

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that causes recurrent, unprovoked seizures. While the cause of epilepsy is unknown in approximately 50% of cases, it can be caused by genetic factors, head trauma, structural brain abnormalities, stroke, infections, autoimmune conditions, metabolic conditions, tumors, or prenatal injury.⁵⁵ It is estimated that 30% of all epilepsies have a genetic cause.⁵⁶ A genetic diagnosis changed treatment in 12-80% of epilepsy patients including optimal anti-seizure medication, dietary treatment, and epilepsy surgical decisions.⁵⁷ A genetic diagnosis also informs recurrence risk estimations used in family planning. A practice guideline on genetic testing for epilepsy was published in 2022, adopted by the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC), and endorsed by the American Epilepsy Society (AES).⁵⁸ The guideline recommends genetic testing for individuals of any age with unexplained epilepsy to include exome/genome sequencing and/or a multi-gene panel (>25 genes) as first-tier testing followed by chromosomal microarray, with exome/genome sequencing conditionally recommended over multi-gene panel. More information can be found in the [Epilepsy Genetic Testing policy](#).

Hearing Loss

The ACMG Professional Practice Guidelines Committee presented updated recommendations for the evaluation and etiological diagnosis of hearing loss.⁵⁹ Hearing loss is genetically heterogeneous, supporting the value of panels and ES/GS in the diagnostic evaluation. Identifying the etiology of hearing loss may affect clinical management, particularly for syndromic hearing loss, improve prognostic accuracy, and guide recurrence risk counseling. The guideline includes an updated algorithm (Figure 1) that integrates pre-test genetic counseling and initial testing using single-gene tests and comprehensive hearing loss gene panels, as well as congenital CMV testing using newborn bloodspots. If the initial testing is unrevealing, ES/GS can be considered.

Inherited Metabolic Disorders

Inherited metabolic disorders (IMDs) are rare genetic or inherited disorders resulting from an enzyme defect in biochemical and metabolic pathways affecting metabolism of proteins, fats, or carbohydrates or impaired organelle function.⁶⁰ IMDs can have complex clinical presentations and often impact multiple organ systems. Diagnosis typically involves a complex combination of biochemical and molecular analyses. Age of presentation can vary, with more severe forms appearing in early childhood accompanied by significant morbidity and mortality. Appropriate acute illness protocols and specific supportive therapies are necessary for individuals diagnosed with an IMD. Mitochondrial diseases are a subset of IMDs, with clinical and genetic heterogeneity that present diagnostic, clinical management, and therapeutic challenges.⁶⁰ Pathogenic variants in nuclear-encoded genes account for most pediatric mitochondrial disease (70-80%) with 20-25% of cases due to pathogenic variants in the mitochondrial genome. Mitochondrial genome variants are more frequently responsible for mitochondrial disease in adults (75%).⁶¹ GS is advantageous in the diagnostic work-up of mitochondrial disease because of coverage of both the nuclear and mitochondrial genomes in a single test, and ability to detect heteroplasmy levels as low as 1%. GS identified both mitochondrial and non-mitochondrial diagnoses in individuals with suspected mitochondrial disorders, preventing the need for invasive tests such as a muscle biopsy.^{61,62}

Inborn errors of immunity

Inborn errors of immunity (IEI), which include Primary Immunodeficiencies (PIDs) and Primary Immune Regulatory Disorders (PIRDs), are a diverse group of disorders caused by defects in the immune system resulting in increased susceptibility to infections, autoimmunity, autoinflammatory diseases, allergies, and malignancies.^{63,64} Over 500 different disorders have been described due to defects in >500 different genes.⁶⁵ The

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

clinical variability and symptom overlap of IELs makes diagnosis based on phenotype challenging as illustrated by data demonstrating in up to 75% of patients, their clinical characteristics alone do not allow for identification of the correct diagnosis.⁶⁶⁻⁶⁸ If not properly diagnosed, individuals with IELs are subject to serious, prolonged, sometimes life-threatening infections or autoimmunity.^{69,70} The Clinical Immunology Society recommends genetic testing for diagnosis and precision treatment.⁷⁰ Exome sequencing studies have demonstrated a diagnostic yield of about 40%, which varies based on different factors including disease subtypes.^{71,72} While an accurate diagnosis is essential for appropriate management, identifying the underlying genetic cause is also important to inform prognosis and treatment decisions such as consideration and/or performance of bone marrow or thymus transplantation, enzyme replacement therapy, biologic supportive therapy, and IgG replacement.^{70,73,74}

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

CPT Codes:

Procedure(s) addressed by this policy:	Procedure Code(s)
Exome (e.g., unexplained constitutional or heritable disorder or syndrome); sequence analysis	81415
Sequence analysis, each comparator exome (e.g., parent(s), sibling(s))	81416
Genome (e.g., unexplained constitutional or heritable disorder or syndrome); sequence analysis	81425
Sequence analysis, each comparator genome (e.g., parent(s), sibling(s))	81426
Genome (e.g., unexplained constitutional or heritable disorder or syndrome), rapid sequence analysis (e.g., RCI GM Rapid Whole Genome Sequencing; Rady Children's Institute for Genomic Medicine)	0094U
Rare diseases (constitutional/heritable disorders), whole genome and mitochondrial DNA sequence analysis, including small sequence changes, deletions, duplications, short tandem repeat gene expansions, and variants in non-uniquely mappable regions, blood or saliva, identification and categorization of genetic variants, proband	0212U
Rare diseases (constitutional/heritable disorders), whole genome and mitochondrial DNA sequence analysis, including small sequence changes, deletions, duplications, short tandem repeat gene expansions, and variants in non-uniquely mappable regions, blood or saliva, identification and categorization of genetic variants, each comparator genome (e.g., parent, sibling)	0213U
Rare diseases (constitutional/heritable disorders), whole exome and mitochondrial DNA sequence analysis, including small sequence changes, deletions, duplications, short tandem repeat gene expansions, and variants in non-uniquely mappable regions, blood or saliva, identification and categorization of genetic variants, proband	0214U
Rare diseases (constitutional/heritable disorders), whole exome and mitochondrial DNA sequence analysis, including small sequence changes, deletions, duplications, short tandem repeat gene expansions, and variants in non-uniquely mappable regions, blood or saliva, identification and categorization of genetic variants, each comparator exome (e.g., parent, sibling)	0215U

References:

1. Nguengang Wakap S, Lambert DM, Olry A, et al. Estimating cumulative point prevalence of rare diseases: analysis of the Orphanet database. *Eur J Hum Genet.* 2020 Feb;28(2):165-173. PMID: 31527858.
2. Marwaha S, Knowles JW, Ashley EA. A guide for the diagnosis of rare and undiagnosed disease: beyond the exome. *Genome Med.* 2022 Feb 28;14(1):23. PMID: 35220969
3. Shashi V, McConkie-Rosell A, Rosell B, et al The utility of the traditional medical genetics diagnostic evaluation in the context of next-generation sequencing for undiagnosed genetic disorders. *Genet Med.* 2014 Feb; 16: 176–182. PMID: 23928913
4. Tan TY, Dillon OJ, Stark Z, et al. Diagnostic Impact and Cost-effectiveness of Whole-Exome Sequencing for Ambulant Children With Suspected Monogenic Conditions. *JAMA Pediatr.* 2017 Sep 1;171(9):855-862. PMID: 28759686

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

5. Dillon OJ, Lunke S, Stark Z, et al. Exome sequencing has higher diagnostic yield compared to simulated disease-specific panels in children with suspected monogenic disorders. *Eur J Hum Genet*. 2018 May;26(5):644-651. PMID: 29453417
6. Lionel AC, Costain G, Monfared N, et al. Improved diagnostic yield compared with targeted gene sequencing panels suggests a role for whole-genome sequencing as a first-tier genetic test. *Genet Med*. 2018 Apr;20(4):435-443. PMID: 28771251
7. Incerti D, Xu XM, Chou JW, et al. Cost-effectiveness of genome sequencing for diagnosing patients with undiagnosed rare genetic diseases. *Genet Med*. 2022 Jan;24(1):109-118. PMID: 34906478
8. Soden SE, Saunders CJ, Willig LK, et al. Effectiveness of exome and genome sequencing guided by acuity of illness for diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders. *Sci Transl Med*. 2014 Dec 3;6(265):265ra168. PMID 25473036
9. Manickam K, McClain MR, Demmer LA, et al. Exome and genome sequencing for pediatric patients with congenital anomalies or intellectual disability: an evidence-based clinical guideline of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genet Med*. 2021 Nov;23(11):2029-2037. PMID: 34211152.
10. Stavropoulos DJ, Merico D, Jobling R, et al. Whole Genome Sequencing Expands Diagnostic Utility and Improves Clinical Management in Pediatric Medicine. *NPJ Genom Med*. 2016 Jan 13;1. PMID: 28567303
11. Stark Z, Schofield D, Martyn M, et al. Does genomic sequencing early in the diagnostic trajectory make a difference? A follow-up study of clinical outcomes and cost-effectiveness. *Genet Med*. 2019 Jan;21(1):173-180. PMID: 29765138
12. Smith HS, Swint JM, Lalani SR, Yamal JM, de Oliveira Otto MC, Castellanos S, Taylor A, Lee BH, Russell HV. Clinical Application of Genome and Exome Sequencing as a Diagnostic Tool for Pediatric Patients: a Scoping Review of the Literature. *Genet Med*. 2019 Jan;21(1):3-16. PMID: 29760485
13. Bick D, Bick SL, Dimmock DP, et al. An online compendium of treatable genetic disorders. *Am J Med Genet C Semin Med Genet*. 2021 Mar;187(1):48-54. PMID: 33350578
14. Malinowski J, Miller DT, Demmer L, et al. Systematic evidence-based review: outcomes from exome and genome sequencing for pediatric patients with congenital anomalies or intellectual disability. *Genet Med*. Jun 2020;22(6):986-1004. doi:10.1038/s41436-020-0771-z
15. Pandey R, Brennan NF, Trachana K, et al. A meta-analysis of diagnostic yield and clinical utility of genome and exome sequencing in pediatric rare and undiagnosed genetic diseases. *Genet Med*. Feb 25 2025;27(6):101398. doi:10.1016/j.gim.2025.101398
16. Wigby KM, Brockman D, Costain G, et al. Evidence review and considerations for use of first line genome sequencing to diagnose rare genetic disorders. *NPJ Genom Med*. Feb 26 2024;9(1):15. doi:10.1038/s41525-024-00396-x
17. Gilissen C, Hehir-Kwa JY, Thung DT, et al. Genome sequencing identifies major causes of severe intellectual disability. *Nature*. 2014 Jul 17;511(7509):344-7. PMID: 24896178
18. Meienberg J, Bruggmann R, et al. Clinical sequencing: is WGS the better WES? *Hum Genet*. 2016; 135: 359–362. PMID: 26742503
19. Bowling KM, Thompson ML, Amaral MD, et al. Genomic diagnosis for children with intellectual disability and/or developmental delay. *Genome Med*. 2017 May 30;9(1):43. PMID: 28554332

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

20. Costain G, Jobling R, Walker S, et al. Periodic reanalysis of whole-genome sequencing data enhances the diagnostic advantage over standard clinical genetic testing. *Eur J Hum Genet.* 2018 May;26(5):740-744. PMID: 29453418
21. Marshall CR, Chowdhury S, Taft RJ, et al. Best practices for the analytical validation of clinical whole-genome sequencing intended for the diagnosis of germline disease. *NPJ Genom Med.* 2020 Oct 23;5:47. PMID: 33110627
22. Splinter K, Adams DR, Bacino CA, et al. Effect of Genetic Diagnosis on Patients with Previously Undiagnosed Disease. *N Engl J Med.* 2018 Nov 29;379(22):2131-2139. PMID: 30304647
23. Bertoli-Avella AM, Beetz C, Ameziane N, et al. Successful application of genome sequencing in a diagnostic setting: 1007 index cases from a clinically heterogeneous cohort. *Eur J Hum Genet.* 2021 Jan;29(1):141-153. PMID: 32860008
24. Wojcik MH, Lemire G, Berger E, et al. Genome Sequencing for Diagnosing Rare Diseases. *N Engl J Med.* 2024 Jun 6;390(21):1985-1997. doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa2314761. PMID: 38838312
25. Taylor JC, Martin HC, Lise S, et al. Factors influencing success of clinical genome sequencing across a broad spectrum of disorders. *Nat Genet.* 2015 Jul;47(7):717-726. PMID: 25985138
26. Clark MM, Stark Z, Farnaes L, et al. Meta-analysis of the diagnostic and clinical utility of genome and exome sequencing and chromosomal microarray in children with suspected genetic diseases. *NPJ Genom Med.* 2018 Jul 9;3:16. PMID: 30002876
27. Wright CF, McRae JF, Clayton S, et al. Making new genetic diagnoses with old data: Iterative reanalysis and reporting from genome-wide data in 1,133 families with developmental disorders. *Genet Med.* 2018 Oct;20(10):1216-1223. PMID: 29323667
28. Nambot S, Thevenon J, Kuentz P, et al. Clinical whole-exome sequencing for the diagnosis of rare disorders with congenital anomalies and/or intellectual disability: Substantial interest of prospective annual reanalysis. *Genet Med.* 2018 Jun;20(6):645-654. PMID: 29095811
29. Tan NB, Stapleton R, Stark Z, et al. Evaluating systematic reanalysis of clinical genomic data in rare disease from single center experience and literature review. *Mol Genet Genomic Med.* 2020 Nov;8(11):e1508. PMID: 32969205
30. Ji J, Leung ML, Baker S, et al. Clinical Exome Reanalysis: Current Practice and Beyond. *Mol Diagn Ther.* 2021 Sep;25(5):529-536. PMID: 34283395
31. Schobers G, Schieving JH, Yntema HG, et al. Reanalysis of exome negative patients with rare disease: a pragmatic workflow for diagnostic applications. *Genome Med.* 2022 Jun 17;14(1):66. PMID: 35710456
32. ACMG Board of Directors. Points to consider in the clinical application of whole-genome sequencing. *Genet Med* 2012; 14:759–761. PMID: 22863877
33. ACMG Board of Directors. Points to consider for informed consent for genome/exome sequencing. *Genet Med* Sept 2013;15(9):748–749. PMID 23970068
34. Rehder C, Bean LJH, Bick D, et al. Next-generation sequencing for constitutional variants in the clinical laboratory, 2021 revision: a technical standard of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genet Med.* 2021 Aug;23(8):1399-1415. PMID: 33927380
35. Miller DT, Lee K, Gordon AS, et al. Recommendations for reporting of secondary findings in clinical exome and genome sequencing, 2021 update: a policy statement of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genet Med.* 2021 Aug;23(8):1391-1398. PMID: 34012069

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

36. Miller DT, Lee K, Abul-Husn NS, et al. ACMG SF v3.2 list for reporting of secondary findings in clinical exome and genome sequencing: A policy statement of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genet Med*. 2023 Aug;25(8):100866. doi: 10.1016/j.gim.2023.100866. Epub 2023 Jun 22. PMID: 37347242
37. Deignan JL, Chung WK, Kearney HM, et al. Points to consider in the reevaluation and reanalysis of genomic test results: a statement of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genet Med*. 2019 Jun;21(6):1267-1270. PMID: 31015575
38. Landstrom AP, Chahal AA, Ackerman MJ, et al. Interpreting Incidentally Identified Variants in Genes Associated With Heritable Cardiovascular Disease: A Scientific Statement From the American Heart Association. *Circ Genom Precis Med*. 2023 Apr;16(2):e000092. PMID: 36970980.
39. Ontario Health (Quality). Genome-Wide Sequencing for Unexplained Developmental Disabilities or Multiple Congenital Anomalies: A Health Technology Assessment. *Ont Health Technol Assess Ser*. 2020 Mar 6;20(11):1-178. PMID: 32194879
40. Smedley D, Smith KR, Martin A, Thomas EA, et al. 100,000 Genomes Pilot on Rare-Disease Diagnosis in Health Care - Preliminary Report. *N Engl J Med*. 2021 Nov 11;385(20):1868-1880. PMID: 34758253
41. Bick D, Fraser PC, Gutzeit MF, et al. Successful Application of Whole Genome Sequencing in a Medical Genetics Clinic. *J Pediatr Genet*. 2017 Jun;6(2):61-76. PMID: 28496993
42. Scocchia A, Wigby KM, Masser-Frye D, et al. Clinical whole genome sequencing as a first-tier test at a resource-limited dysmorphology clinic in Mexico. *NPJ Genom Med*. 2019 Feb 14;4:5. PMID: 30792901
43. Chung CCY, Hue SPY, Ng NYT, et al. Meta-analysis of the diagnostic and clinical utility of exome and genome sequencing in pediatric and adult patients with rare diseases across diverse populations. *Genet Med*. 2023 May 13;25(9):100896. PMID: 37191093.
44. Lavelle TA, Feng X, Keisler M, et al. Cost-effectiveness of exome and genome sequencing for children with rare and undiagnosed conditions. *Genet Med*. 2022 Jun;24(6):1349-1361. PMID: 35396982
45. Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling. Practice-Based Competencies for Genetic Counselors, Revised competency Domain 1, Number 4. 2020. Available from: <https://www.gceducation.org/forms-resources/>
46. Kieke MC, Conta JH, Riley JD, Zetzsche LH. The current landscape of genetic test stewardship: A multi-center prospective study. *J Genet Couns*. 2021 Aug;30(4):1203-1210. PMID: 33728729
47. Srivastava S, Love-Nichols JA, Dies KA, et al. Meta-analysis and multidisciplinary consensus statement: exome sequencing is a first-tier clinical diagnostic test for individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders. *Genet Med*. 2019 Nov;21(11):2413-2421. PMID: 31182824
48. Lindstrand A, Eisfeldt J, Pettersson M, et al. From cytogenetics to cytogenomics: whole-genome sequencing as a first-line test comprehensively captures the diverse spectrum of disease-causing genetic variation underlying intellectual disability. *Genome Med*. 2019 Nov 7;11(1):68. PMID: 31694722
49. Lowther C, Valkanas E, Giordano JL, et al. Systematic evaluation of genome sequencing for the diagnostic assessment of autism spectrum disorder and fetal structural anomalies. *Am J Hum Genet*. 2023 Sep 7;110(9):1454-1469. doi: 10.1016/j.ajhg.2023.07.010
50. Gonzalez-Mantilla PJ, Hu Y, Myers SM, et al. Diagnostic Yield of Exome Sequencing in Cerebral Palsy and Implications for Genetic Testing Guidelines: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2023; 177(5), 472-478. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.0008>

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

51. Santana Almansa A, Gable DL, Frazier Z, et al. Clinical utility of a genetic diagnosis in individuals with cerebral palsy and related motor disorders. *Ann Clin Transl Neurol*. 2024 Feb;11(2):251-262. doi: 10.1002/acn3.51942
52. Moreno-De-Luca A, Millan F, Pesacrete DR, et al. Molecular Diagnostic Yield of Exome Sequencing in Patients With Cerebral Palsy. *JAMA*. 2021 Feb 2;325(5):467-475. doi: 10.1001/jama.2020.26148
53. Srivastava S, Lewis SA, Cohen JS, et al. Molecular Diagnostic Yield of Exome Sequencing and Chromosomal Microarray in Cerebral Palsy: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *JAMA Neurol*. 2022 Dec 1;79(12):1287-1295. doi: 10.1001/jamaneurol.2022.3549
54. Lewis SA, Chopra M, Cohen JS, et al. Clinical Actionability of Genetic Findings in Cerebral Palsy: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2025 Feb 1;179(2):137–44. doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2024.5059
55. Epilepsy - symptoms and causes. Mayo Clinic <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/epilepsy/symptoms-causes/syc-20350093> (Last updated April 2023)
56. International League Against Epilepsy Consortium on Complex Epilepsies. Electronic address: epilepsy-austin@unimelb.edu.au. Genetic determinants of common epilepsies: a meta-analysis of genome-wide association studies. *Lancet Neurol*. 2014 Sep;13(9):893-903. PMID: 25087078
57. Sheidley BR, Malinowski J, Bergner AL, et al. Genetic testing for the epilepsies: A systematic review. *Epilepsia*. 2022 Feb;63(2):375-387. PMID: 34893972
58. Smith L, Malinowski J, Ceulemans S, et al. Genetic testing and counseling for the unexplained epilepsies: An evidence-based practice guideline of the National Society of Genetic Counselors. *J Genet Couns*. 2023 Apr;32(2):266-280. PMID: 36281494
59. Li MM, Tayoun AA, DiStefano M, et al. Clinical evaluation and etiologic diagnosis of hearing loss: A clinical practice resource of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genet Med*. 2022 Jul;24(7):1392-1406. PMID: 35802133.
60. Ferreira CR, Rahman S, Keller M, et al. An international classification of inherited metabolic disorders (ICIMD). *J Inherit Metab Dis*. 2021 Jan;44(1):164-177. PMID: 33340416
61. Schon KR, Horvath R, Wei W, et al. Use of whole genome sequencing to determine genetic basis of suspected mitochondrial disorders: cohort study. *BMJ*. 2021 Nov 3;375:e066288. PMID: 34732400
62. Riley LG, Cowley MJ, Gayevskiy V, et al. The diagnostic utility of genome sequencing in a pediatric cohort with suspected mitochondrial disease. *Genet Med*. 2020 Jul;22(7):1254-1261. PMID: 32313153
63. Hurabielle C, LaFlam TN, Gearing M, & CJ Ye. Functional genomics in inborn errors of immunity. *Immunol Rev*. 2024; 322(1), 53-70. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imr.13309>
64. von Hardenberg S, Klefenz I, Steinemann D, et al. Current genetic diagnostics in inborn errors of immunity. *Front Pediatr*. 2024 Apr 10;12:1279112. doi: 10.3389/fped.2024.1279112
65. Poli MC, Aksentijevich I, Bousfiha AA, et al. Human inborn errors of immunity: 2024 update on the classification from the International Union of Immunological Societies Expert Committee. *Journal of Human Immunity*. 2025; 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.70962/jhi.20250003>
66. Okano T, Imai K, Naruto T, et al. Whole-Exome Sequencing-Based Approach for Germline Mutations in Patients with Inborn Errors of Immunity. *J Clin Immunol*. 2020 Jul;40(5):729-740. doi: 10.1007/s10875-020-00798-3

Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease

67. Quinn J, Modell V, Johnson B, et al. Global Expansion of Jeffrey's Insights: Jeffrey Modell Foundation's Genetic Sequencing Program for Primary Immunodeficiency. *Front Immunol.* 2022 Jun 10;13:906540. doi: 10.3389/fimmu.2022.906540
68. Stray-Pedersen A, Sorte HS, Samarakoon P, et al. Primary immunodeficiency diseases: Genomic approaches delineate heterogeneous Mendelian disorders. *J Allergy Clin Immunol.* 2017 Jan;139(1):232-245. doi: 10.1016/j.jaci.2016.05.042. Epub 2016 Jul 16. Erratum in: *J Allergy Clin Immunol.* 2018 Feb;141(2):832. doi: 10.1016/j.jaci.2017.12.975
69. Arts P, Simons A, AlZahrani MS, et al. Exome sequencing in routine diagnostics: a generic test for 254 patients with primary immunodeficiencies. *Genome Med.* 2019; 11(1), 38. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13073-019-0649-3>
70. Heimall JR, Hagin D, Hajjar J, et al. Use of Genetic Testing for Primary Immunodeficiency Patients. *J Clin Immunol.* 2018; 38(3), 320-329. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10875-018-0489-8>
71. Chen Y, Li D, Yin J, et al. Diagnostic yield of next-generation sequencing in suspect primary immunodeficiencies diseases: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clin Exp Med.* 2024; 24(1), 131. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10238-024-01392-2>
72. Vorstevelde EE, Hoischen A, van der Made CI. Next-Generation Sequencing in the Field of Primary Immunodeficiencies: Current Yield, Challenges, and Future Perspectives. *Clin Rev Allergy Immunol.* 2021 Oct;61(2):212-225. doi: 10.1007/s12016-021-08838-5.
73. Branch A, Modi B, Bahrani B, et al. Diverse clinical features and diagnostic delay in monogenic inborn errors of immunity: A call for access to genetic testing. *Pediatr Allergy Immunol.* 2021; 32(8), 1796-1803. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pai.13571>
74. Chinn IK, & JS Orange. A 2020 update on the use of genetic testing for patients with primary immunodeficiency. *Expert Rev Clin Immunol.* 2020; 16(9), 897-909. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1744666x.2020.1814145>

Update details:

2024-25: Expanded inclusion criteria to include cerebral palsy and inborn errors of immunity (IEI). Revised policy title from “Genomic Sequencing for Rare Disease” to “Exome and Genome Sequencing for Rare Disease”. Revised points within the Other Considerations section related to the use of ES/GS as a first-tier test and guidance regarding provider-type restrictions. Reformatted policy to move criteria and other considerations section. Reviewed and updated references.