FirstCarolinaCare Insurance Company, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of FirstHealth OF THE CAROLINAS, INC.
• The patient’s condition is unstable and requires frequent assessments and changes in the plan of care and that such care cannot be met through a traditional skilled nursing visit.

**When Private Duty Nursing is Not Covered**

• The nurse providing the care cannot be a spouse, sibling, child, parent or in-law

• Private duty nursing is not covered in any setting other than the patient’s private residence

• The services are not covered solely to provide respite for caregiver’s or the patient’s family or to allow caregivers or family to work or attend school

• Cost of travel to and from the residence is part of the cost of care and not covered separately

• Custodial care is not considered private duty nursing

**Policy Guidelines**

All requests for PDN will be reviewed by the FCC Medical Director. The number and intensity of services will vary based upon the individual needs of the patient. Approval will be based upon supporting clinical information provided by the treating physician and must be sufficiently detailed to define the complexity and intensity of the patient’s needs. Careful assessment of the skill sets required to provide care will need to be clearly defined to so that the private duty nurse will be able to acknowledge whether those specific skills meet professional abilities.

The additional intent of PDN is to provide the training necessary for both caregivers and family members to gradually transition some of the patient’s care needs as the intensity of private duty nursing services decreases. The patient and family need to be made aware of this ultimate goal early-on in the care so that this endpoint remains the eventual focus of the treatment plan. If there is no caregiver available to ultimately assume the patient’s care, then **PDN will not be considered appropriate**.

The patient who needs PDN generally is unable to leave the home setting without the licensed nurse. However the need for a patient to participate in activity outside of the home is not a justification to initiate PDN services.

In the situation when the patient is a child who must attend school, the private duty nurse may accompany the patient. In this setting the child’s medical needs must meet the guidelines for PDN services.

The patient’s needs often may require changes in the care plan and all such patient care changes as well as progress must be appropriately documented. Any changes in treatments or therapies need to meet medical necessity guidelines and be deemed necessary by the treating physician. Such changes in the treatment plan need to be reflected in the physician orders.

PDN services become maintenance or custodial when any of the following occur:
Medical documentation that supports the patient’s condition is stable and/or predictable

The plan of care no longer requires a licensed nurse

The family or caregivers have been trained adequately and have demonstrated the skills necessary to continue the plan of care.

**Billing/Coding**

This policy will apply to the following codes

S9123, S9124

FCC may request medical records for determination of medical necessity. Letters of support and an explanation of anticipated needs will also be considered useful in the medical necessity determination.

**References:**


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Private Duty Nursing