



**VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA (VAC)
PROGRAM OF CHOICE (POC) 06 – MEDICAL SERVICES
ALL PROVINCES**

December 2021

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) wishes to advise you of new benefits within Program of Choice (POC) 06 – Medical Services, **effective January 1, 2022.**

Benefit Code	Description	Benefit Information
220235	Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) – Initial sessions	Preauthorization: Required Prescriber: Medical Doctor (MD), Psychiatrist (PH) Frequency: 30/6 Calendar Months (30 per lifetime)
240365	Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) – Reoccurrence sessions	Preauthorization: Required Prescriber: Medical Doctor (MD), Psychiatrist (PH) Frequency: 30/6 Calendar Months (30 per lifetime)
240370	Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) – Maintenance sessions	Preauthorization: Required Prescriber: Medical Doctor (MD), Psychiatrist (PH) Frequency: 30 per lifetime

Please Note: rTMS may be reimbursed up to the maximum rate contained in the applicable provincial health fee guide for the health professional that is administering the treatment. If the services of a technician are utilized, this should be reflected in the rate charged.

rTMS treatment may be approved when the following conditions are met:

- It is provided as first-line treatment for treatment-resistant depression.
- A depressive disorder is also present with PTSD.
- The treatment must be recommended by Veteran’s treating general practitioner or psychiatrist, who confirms **the diagnosis of a depressive disorder** and that two trials of anti-depressants have failed.

NOTE: Please ensure your pre-authorization request includes a treatment plan with the condition being treated, medical rationale, length of each session, number of sessions per week, number of weeks and which trials of anti-depressants (at least 2) were used.

Frequency and Duration

1) Initial and Reoccurrence Sessions

- To reach maximum effect, delivered in up to 5 sessions (37.5 minutes per session) per week over 4-6 weeks.
- Alternatively, intermittent theta-burst version of rTMS (iTBS) can be delivered in approximately 15 minute sessions (with each session comprising of 3 minutes for the intermittent theta-burst, and approximately 10 to 12 minutes for obtaining a rating, blood pressure monitoring, etc.).
- Treatment protocol to be established by treating psychiatrist.
- Initial sessions can be approved up to a maximum of 30 sessions in 6 months in a lifetime.
- Reoccurrence sessions can be approved up to a maximum of 30 sessions in 6 months in a lifetime. Sessions must commence at least 6 months after the last initial treatment.

2) Maintenance Sessions

- After reoccurrence of treatment, maintenance sessions may be approved if recommended by a psychiatrist. These would consist of progressively lower session frequencies (e.g., twice per week, then once per week, then once per month).
- Maintenance sessions can be approved up to a maximum of 30 sessions in a lifetime.

Provision of Treatment

- By a psychiatrist directly, or by a technician or other health professional under the direct supervision of the psychiatrist, who must be in the clinic / on-site and assumes primary responsibility for the care of the Veteran.
- The clinician / technician is required to be in the room with the Veteran at all times to ensure that the Veteran stays on task and receives proper coaching during the rTMS session.

Administrative Requirements

The psychiatrist is responsible for:

- The development, implementation and updating of the treatment plan.
- Reporting on the rTMS treatment, including liaising, and collaborating with the Veteran's primary therapist (if required); and
- Maintaining details of billing including who provided the rTMS sessions.

PLEASE NOTE: rTMS is not a mental health service available to family members.

Providers shall charge the lesser of the rate charged by the provider to any patient paying cash for the same service/product, up to the maximum rate contained in the applicable provincial health fee schedule.

For details pertaining to fees and claims submission requirements, please refer to the Claims Submission Agreement and related supporting documentation found on the Medavie Blue Cross website at www.medaviebc.ca and click on the Health Professionals link. On our website you will also find important information on how to:

- register to access our secure ePay provider portal by clicking on the Register or Update link.
- sign up for direct deposit; and
- view provider guides and benefit grids, download provider payment schedules and other important information.

Should you have any questions, please contact Medavie Blue Cross at 1-888-261-4033.

Thank you for the ongoing care and service that you provide to our Veterans.