I. POLICY/CRITERIA

Keratoplasty that treats specific lesions of the cornea such as phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK) that removes scar tissue from the visual field and deals with an abnormality of the eye may be covered.

Post-Cataract Post-Transplant Corneal Surgery
Correction of surgically induced astigmatism with a corneal relaxing incision or corneal wedge resection is considered medically necessary if the member had previous penetrating keratoplasty (corneal transplant) within the past 60 months or cataract surgery within the last 36 months and both of the following criteria are met:

1. The degree of astigmatism must be 3.00 diopters or greater; and
2. The member must be intolerant of glasses or contact lenses.

Correction of surgically induced astigmatism with a corneal relaxing incision or corneal wedge resection is covered when medical necessity criteria are met, even if the member's plan excludes refractive surgery.

Intrastromal corneal ring segments (INTACS) are considered medically necessary for reduction or elimination of myopia or astigmatism in persons with keratoconus or pellucid marginal degeneration who are no longer able to achieve adequate vision using contact lenses or spectacles and for whom corneal transplant is the only remaining option.

Phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK) should not be confused with photorefractive keratectomy (PRK). Although technically the same procedure, PTK is used for the correction of particular corneal diseases, whereas PRK involves the use of the excimer laser for correction of refractive errors (e.g. myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism, and presbyopia) in persons with otherwise non-diseased corneas.

PTK may be medically necessary for members with any of the following:

1. Superficial corneal dystrophy, including granular, lattice and Reis-Buckler’s dystrophy
2. Epithelial membrane dystrophy
3. Irregular corneal surfaces due to Salzmann’s nodular degeneration or keratoconus nodules
4. Corneal scars and opacities including post-traumatic, post infectious, post surgical and secondary to pathology
5. Recurrent corneal erosions when more conservative measures such as lubricants, hypertonic saline, patching, bandage contact lenses, gentle debridement of severely aberrant epithelium have failed to halt the erosions

PTK for treatment of infectious keratitis is not covered and, because it has not been shown to be safe and effective for this indication, is considered experimental and investigational.

Performance of PTK in combination with collagen cross-linkage is not covered and considered experimental and investigational.

Refractive surgeries, including the following procedures are not a covered benefit:
1. Photorefractive Keratectomy (PRK)
2. Laser in situ Keratomileusis (LASIK)
3. Laser Epithelial Keratomileusis (LASEK)
4. Radical Keratomy (RK)
5. Laser Thermokeratoplasty (LTK)
6. Phakic Intraocular Lens (IOL) Implantation
7. Clear Lens Extraction (CLE),
8. Phakic Intraocular Lens Implantation,
9. Intracorneal Inlays
10. Automated Lamellar Keratoplasty (ALK)
11. Hexagonal keratotomy
12. Conductive keratoplasty (CK)
13. Minimally invasive radial keratotomy (mini-RK)

II. MEDICAL NECESSITY REVIEW

☐ Required  ☒ Not Required  ☐ Not Applicable

III. APPLICATION TO PRODUCTS

Coverage is subject to member’s specific benefits. Group specific policy will supersede this policy when applicable.

- **HMO/EPO**: This policy applies to insured HMO/EPO plans.
- **POS**: This policy applies to insured POS plans.
- **PPO**: This policy applies to insured PPO plans. Consult individual plan documents as state mandated benefits may apply. If there is a conflict between this policy and a plan document, the provisions of the plan document will govern.
IV. DESCRIPTION

Background:
The basic parts of the human eye include the cornea, pupil, lens, retina, and the optic nerve. The cornea and lens work together to focus and bend, (refract) light entering the eye to form a single focal point of an image on the retina that is then sent via the optic nerve to the brain. The overall shape of the eye and imperfections of the cornea or lens can result in refractive error. With a refractive error, instead of the focal point focusing directly on the retina, the image focal point lands in front, behind, or on multiple points of the retina resulting in a blurred image.¹

A refractive error (ametropia) is a disorder that occurs when parallel rays of light entering the non-accommodating eye are not focused on the retina. There are different types of refractive errors: Myopia (nearsightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness), astigmatism (distortion due to two different focal points), and presbyopia (aging lens is unable to focus up close).

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology (Preferred Practice Pattern Report on Refractive Errors), three quarters of Americans over the age of 40 have refractive errors greater than 0.5 diopters (D). It has been estimated that 150 million Americans currently use some form of eyewear to correct refractive errors, and of this number, 36 million use contact lenses. In 2000, nearly 1.3 million laser in situ keratomileusis (LASIK) procedures were performed in the United States. In a 2003 survey of U.S. ophthalmology surgeons, LASIK was the most commonly performed refractive surgery. Photorefractive keratectomy
(PRK) and laser subepithelial keratomileusis (LASEK) are the most common alternatives to LASIK.

The term refractive surgery describes various procedures that modify the refractive error of the eye. Most of these procedures involve altering the cornea and are collectively referred to as keratorefractive surgery, refractive keratoplasty, or refractive corneal surgery. Refractive surgery may be considered when a patient wishes to be less dependent on spectacles or contact lenses, or when there are occupational or cosmetic reasons not to wear spectacles. Refractive surgery is an elective procedure.

The most commonly performed procedures utilize the excimer laser, which was first approved for this purpose by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 1995. Photorefractive keratectomy (PRK) was the first procedure performed; subsequently, laser in situ keratomileusis (LASIK) has become the most commonly performed keratorefractive surgery. Other keratorefractive procedures include laser epithelial keratomileusis (LASEK), insertion of intrastromal corneal ring segments (ICRS; trade name INTACS), minimally invasive radial keratotomy (mini-RK), hexagonal keratotomy, conductive keratoplasty (CK), clear lens extraction (CLE), and radial keratotomy (RK).

V. CODING INFORMATION

ICD-10 Codes that may support medical necessity of the following codes:

H17.9 Unspezifizierte Kornealschwellung
H17.89 Andere Kornealschwellungen
H17.811 - H17.819 Wenigstens eine Kornealschwellung
H17.821 - H17.829 Peripherer Kornealschwellung
H17.00 – H17.03 Adhäsive Leukomalazie
H17.10 - H17.13 Zentrale Kornealschwellung
H18.899 Andere bedingte Kornealschwellungen, unbeschriebene Augen
A18.59 Eine andere Tuberkulose des Auges
H18.40 Unspezifizierte Kornealdegeneration
H18.831 - H18.839 Recurrente Kornealschwellung
H18.421 - H18.429 Bandkeratopathie
H18.43 Andere Kalkschwellungen
H18.441 - H18.449 Keratomalazie
H18.451 - H18.459 Noduläre Kornealdegeneration
H18.461 - H18.469 Peripherer Kornealdegeneration
H18.49 Andere Kornealdegeneration
H18.50 – H18.59 Hereditäre Kornealdystrophien
T85.318A - T85.318S Breakdown (mechanische) von anderen ocular prosthetischen Geräten, Implantaten und Transplantaten
T85.328A - T85.328S Displacement von anderen ocular prosthetischen Geräten, Implantaten und Transplantaten
ICD-10 Codes that do not support medical necessity of the following procedures:

The following procedures are NOT covered when billed with these dx:

H52.00 - H52.03  Hypermetropia  
H52.10 - H52.13  Myopia  
H52.201 - H52.209  Astigmatism, Unspecified  
H52.211 - H52.219  Irregular Astigmatism  
H52.221- H52.229  Regular astigmatism  
H52.31  Anisometropia  
H52.32  Aniseikonia  
H52.4  Presbyopia  
H52.6  Other disorders of refraction  
H52.7  Unspecified disorder of refraction  
Z01.00 - Z01.01  Encounter for examination of eyes and vision

CPT/HCPCS Codes:

0402T  Collagen cross-linking of cornea (including removal of the corneal epithelium and intraoperative pachymetry when performed) (Not covered for Priority Health Medicaid)

65770  Keratoprosthesis

65772  Corneal relaxing incision for correction of surgically induced astigmatism

65775  Corneal wedge resection for correction of surgically induced astigmatism

S0812  Phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK) (not billable for Priority Health Medicare, not covered for Priority Health Medicaid)

66999  Unlisted procedure, anterior segment of eye  
(Explanatory notes must accompany claim)

ICD-10 Codes that apply:

H18.609 – H18.603  Keratoconus, unspecified  
H18.611 – H18.619  Keratoconus, stable  
H18.621 - H18.629  Keratoconus, unstable  
H18.40  Unspecified corneal degeneration  
Q13.4  Other congenital corneal malformations

CPT/HCPCS Codes - This procedure covered only for the diagnoses above when criteria is met.

65785  Implantation of intrastromal corneal ring segments

CPT/HCPCS Codes – Not Covered:

65760  Keratomileusis

65765  Keratophakia

65767  Epikeratoplasty
VI. REFERENCES

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