

Effective February 1, 2010

AMERIGROUP Community Care Radiology Utilization Management Quick Reference Guide

AMERIGROUP Community Care has selected National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA) to provide radiology network management services to its members. NIA will provide utilization management services for outpatient MR, CT, PET and Nuclear Cardiology imaging procedures.

Procedures Requiring Precertification*

- CT/CTA Scan
- MRI/MRA
- PET Scan
- Nuclear Cardiology

The following services will not be impacted by this transition:

- Inpatient advanced radiology services
- Emergency room advanced radiology services
- Outpatient radiology services other than MR, CT, PET and Nuclear Cardiology imaging studies
- AMERIGROUP will continue to perform precertification of coverage for interventional radiology procedures (even those that utilize MR/CT technology)

If an emergency clinical situation exists outside of a hospital emergency room, you should proceed with the examination and call NIA at 1-800-642-7565 the next business day to initiate the normal review process.

Please refer to the document on our web site titled Billable CPT[®] Codes Claim Resolution Matrix for a list of all the CPT-4 codes that NIA authorizes on behalf of AMERIGROUP.

Precertification Process

You may obtain precertification through the NIA Web site at www.RadMD.com, or through the NIA Call Center at 1-800-642-7565.

To expedite the process, please have the following information ready before logging on to NIA's Web site or calling the NIA Utilization Management staff (*denotes required information):

- Name and office phone number of ordering physician*
- Member name and ID number*
- Requested examination*
- Name of provider office or facility where the service will be performed*
- Anticipated date of service (if known)
- Details justifying the examination*:
 - Symptoms and their duration
 - Physician exam findings

- Conservative treatment patient has already completed (e.g., physical therapy, chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation, hot pads, massage, ice packs and medication)
- Preliminary procedures already completed (e.g., X-rays, CTs, lab work, ultrasound, scoped procedures, referrals to specialist and specialist evaluation)
- Reason the study is being requested (e.g., further evaluation, rule out a disorder)
- Please be prepared to fax the following information, if requested:
 - Clinical notes X-ray reports Previous CT/MRI reports
 - Specialist reports/evaluation Ultrasound reports

Web Site Access

- You can request precertification at www.RadMD.com Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to midnight Eastern Time, and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Eastern Time.
- A facility or imaging provider can access information on approved authorizations at www.RadMD.com. The facility may search based on the patient's ID number, patient's name or, if known, by the authorization number.
- Both the referring and rendering providers can obtain a unique user name and password for each individual user in the office or facility. To begin, simply go to www.RadMD.com, click on the New User button and complete the application form.
- If you request an authorization through NIA's Web site and your request is pending, you will receive a tracking number. NIA will contact you to complete the process.
- The NIA Web site cannot be used for retrospective or expedited authorization requests. Those requests must be processed through NIA's toll-free number.

Telephone Access

- You may request precertification by calling 1-800-642-7565 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.
- The NIA Call Center can accept multiple requests during one phone call.

Precertification Implementation Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered for your review and consideration in developing an effective procedure for your facility. These recommendations are for informational purposes only and are not policies of AMERIGROUP or NIA.

The ordering physician is responsible for obtaining the precertification number for the study requested. Patient symptoms, past clinical history and prior treatment information will be required and should be available at the time of the request.

As a provider of diagnostic imaging services that require precertification, it is essential that you develop a process to ensure that you have obtained the appropriate authorization number(s).

Please note it is the responsibility of the rendering facility to ensure that precertification was obtained, when necessary. Payment will be denied for procedures performed without a required authorization, and the member cannot be balance-billed for such procedures.

Precertification Recommendations

To ensure that authorization numbers have been obtained, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Communicate to all personnel involved in outpatient scheduling that precertification is required for the specified procedures under many plans.
- If a physician's office calls to schedule a patient for a procedure requiring precertification, request the authorization number.
- If the referring physician has not obtained precertification when required, inform the physician of this requirement and advise him or her to obtain an authorization by visiting NIA's Web site at www.RadMD.com, or by calling NIA's toll-free number, 1-800-642-7565. You may elect to institute a time frame in which to obtain the precertification number (e.g., 1 business day).
- If a patient calls to schedule an appointment for a procedure that requires precertification and does not have the authorization number, the patient should be directed back to the referring physician who ordered the examination.

The NIA Diagnostic Clinical Guidelines can be found on NIA's Web site, www.RadMD.com. These clinical guidelines, for the use of imaging examinations, have been developed from practice experience, literature review, specialty criteria sets and empirical data.

Quick Contacts

- Web site: www.RadMD.com
- Toll-free number: 1-800-642-7565
- NIA Call Center hours: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time

Important Notes

- Authorizations are valid for 60 days from the date of final determination.
- The NIA authorization number consists of eight or nine alphanumeric characters (e.g., 1234X5678). In some cases, you may receive an NIA tracking number (not the same as an authorization number) if your authorization request is not approved at the time of initial request. You can use either number to track the status of the request on the RadMD Web site or via the NIA Interactive Voice Response telephone system.
- For precertification complaints/appeals, please follow the instructions on your denial letter or explanation of payments.
- It is the responsibility of the physician ordering the imaging examination to call for precertification. If the authorization is not given during the initial intake process (level one), the case will be forwarded to the NIA clinical department for review of the clinical information. If additional information is requested, it can be faxed to NIA's dedicated clinical fax line. An ordering physician's office may request an immediate transfer to a nurse clinical reviewer (level two) during the initial request. Please note, however, this request should only be made if a clinician in the office is available to speak with an NIA nurse, and provide additional clinical information supporting the request.
- If the authorization is still pending at the end of the initial call, it is not necessary for the ordering physician's office to remain on the line. If the authorization request still does not meet clinical criteria at the nurse's review level, it will be escalated to a physician's review (level three). At that point, the NIA physician may ask for more clinical information or request to have a peer discussion with the ordering physician.
- AMERIGROUP will retain ultimate responsibility and control over claims adjudication and all medical policies and procedures.

Disclaimer: An authorization number is not a guarantee of payment.