

Talking Points

Cardiac Studies for Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania Members

Why do some cardiac-related studies now require prior authorization?

Prior authorization is required to minimize radiation exposure and promote non-invasive testing when appropriate. Cardiac CT Angiography (CCTA) technology is now covered under the cardiac imaging management program. Other cardiac studies such as nuclear cardiology and stress echo are also part of the program.

When does the cardiac imaging management program begin?

The program begins November 1, 2011. We will work with you and your office staff to ensure that you are prepared for the launch of this program.

How does the program work?

The cardiac imaging management program assesses imaging technologies used to diagnose and monitor patients with coronary artery disease in non-emergent cases. The program takes a comprehensive approach to determine if a recommended test is the proper next step in diagnosing coronary artery disease or if another test is more appropriate.

What cardiac-related imaging procedures are included?

- Nuclear Cardiology/MPI
- Cardiac CT Angiography (CCTA)
- Stress Echo

What additional services are provided?

- Coverage of CCTA as a diagnostic tool for coronary artery disease.
- Evidence-based algorithms to help identify the best diagnostic options for each patient.
- Physician consultations with cardiologists for elective cardiac diagnostic imaging (stress echo, nuclear cardiology/MPI and CCTA).
- Access to a network of imaging providers who meet the highest technical and professional standards.

What services do ordering providers need to get prior authorization for?

- MRI/MRA
- CT/CTA
- CCTA
- PET Scans
- Stress Echo
- Nuclear Cardiology

KEY PROVISIONS

- Imaging services performed in the following settings do not require Prior Authorization through NIA: emergency room, observation, inpatient and urgent care centers

What can a patient/member expect?

Physicians now have another option for diagnosing coronary artery disease, and that translates to achieving an accurate diagnosis as quickly as possible with the fewest number of tests and the least amount of radiation.

Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania provides radiology network management services with administrative assistance from National Imaging Associates, Inc., an independent radiology benefits management company not affiliated with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

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