



**National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA)  
 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)  
 Ambetter from Sunshine Health  
 Prior Authorization Program  
 Physical Medicine Services**

Question	Answer
<b>General</b>	
<b>When do physical medicine services begin to require prior authorization for Ambetter from Sunshine Health members?</b>	Effective January 1, 2021, physical medicine services (physical, occupational, and speech therapy) require prior authorization for all Ambetter from Sunshine Health Plan members.
<b>What services require prior authorization?</b>	Prior authorization is required for all treatment rendered by a physical, occupational or speech therapist for an Ambetter from Sunshine Health Plan member.
<b>Does NIA require authorization for out of network physical medicine services?</b>	No, NIA only manages authorization requests for physical medicine services that are performed by Ambetter from Sunshine Health contracted physical medicine providers. If you are not a contracted provider with Ambetter from Sunshine Health, please follow the Ambetter from Sunshine requirements for out of network requests.
<b>Is prior authorization required for the initial evaluation?</b>	CPT codes for physical, occupational and speech therapy initial evaluations do not require an authorization for participating providers. However, all other billed CPT codes, even if performed on the same date as the initial evaluation date, will require authorization prior to billing.
<b>Which Ambetter from Sunshine Health members are covered under this relationship and what networks are used?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NIA manages physical medicine services for all Ambetter from Sunshine Health members.</li> <li>• NIA manages physical medicine services through the Ambetter from Sunshine Health network of providers.</li> </ul>

<b>Is prior authorization necessary for physical medicine services if Ambetter from Sunshine Health is NOT the member's primary insurance?</b>	Yes. This program applies to members with Ambetter from Sunshine Health as their primary or secondary insurance.
<b>What services are included in this physical medicine program?</b>	All outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy services are included in this program in the following setting locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outpatient office</li> <li>• Outpatient hospital</li> <li>• Home health</li> </ul>
<b>Which services are excluded from the physical medicine program?</b>	Therapy provided in hospital ER, inpatient and observation status; acute rehab hospital inpatient; inpatient and outpatient skilled nursing facility settings are excluded from this program. The rendering provider should continue to follow Ambetter from Sunshine Health's policies and procedures for services performed in the above settings.
<b>Why did Ambetter from Sunshine Health implement a physical medicine utilization management program?</b>	This physical medicine solution is designed to promote evidence-based and cost-effective physical, occupational and speech therapy services for Ambetter from Sunshine Health members.
<b>Why focus on physical, occupational and speech therapy services?</b>	A consistent approach to applying evidence-based guidelines is necessary so Ambetter from Sunshine Health members can receive high quality and cost-effective physical medicine services.
<b>How are types of therapies defined?</b>	<p><u>Rehabilitative therapy</u> – Is a type of treatment or service that seeks to help a patient regain a skill or function that was lost as a result of being sick, hurt or disabled.</p> <p><u>Habilitative therapy</u> – Is a type of treatment or service that seeks to help patients develop skills or functions that they didn't have and were incapable of developing on their own. This type of treatment tends to be common for pediatric patients who haven't developed certain skills at an age-appropriate level.</p> <p>The simplest way to distinguish the difference between the two is Habilitative is treatment for skills/functions that the patient never had, while Rehabilitative is treatment for skills/functions that the patient had but lost.</p>

	<p><u>Neurological rehabilitative therapy</u> – Is a supervised program of formal training to restore function to patients who have neurodegenerative diseases, spinal cord injuries, strokes, or traumatic brain injury.</p>
<p><b>What types of providers are potentially impacted by this physical medicine program?</b></p>	<p>Independent providers, hospital outpatient and multispecialty groups rendering physical therapy, occupational therapy and/or speech therapy services need to ensure prior authorization has been obtained.</p>
<p><b>Prior Authorization Process</b></p>	
<p><b>How are prior authorization decisions made?</b></p>	<p>NIA makes medical necessity decisions based on the clinical information supplied by practitioners/facilities providing physical medicine services. Decisions are made as quickly as possible from submission of all requested clinical documentation. For standard requests, decisions are rendered within 15 calendar days. Peer-to-peer telephone requests are available at any point during the prior authorization process.</p> <p>Clinical determinations are rendered only by clinical peer reviewers with appropriate clinical experience and similar specialty expertise as the requesting provider.</p>
<p><b>Who is responsible for obtaining prior authorization of the physical medicine services?</b></p>	<p>The physical medicine practitioner/facility is responsible for obtaining prior authorization for physical medicine services. A physician order may be required for a member to engage with the physical medicine practitioner, but the provider rendering the service is ultimately responsible for obtaining the authorization based on the plan of care they establish. Determination letters are sent to the member and physical medicine practitioner.</p> <p>Ambetter from Sunshine Health contracts generally do not allow balance billing of members. Please make every effort to ensure that prior authorization has been obtained prior to rendering a physical medicine service.</p>
<p><b>Do CPT codes used to evaluate a member require prior authorization?</b></p>	<p>Initial Physical, occupational and speech therapy evaluation codes do not require authorization. It may be appropriate to render a service that does require authorization at the time of the evaluation. After the initial visit, providers have up to 5 business days to request approval for the first visit. If requests are received timely, NIA will backdate the start of the authorization to cover the evaluation date of service to include any other services rendered at that time.</p>

	<p>Home health providers submitting claims using codes other than designated initial evaluation CPT codes for the initial evaluation should request an authorization within the timeframe listed above so the authorization can be backdated to cover these services.</p>
<p><b>What do providers and office staff need to do to get a physical medicine service authorized?</b></p>	<p>Providers are encouraged to utilize RadMD, (<a href="http://www.RadMD.com">www.RadMD.com</a>) to request prior authorization of physical medicine services. If a provider is unable to use RadMD, they may call 1-800-424-4909.</p>
<p><b>What kind of response time can providers expect for prior authorization of physical medicine requests?</b></p>	<p>NIA leverages a clinical algorithm to assist in making real-time decisions at the time of the request based on the requestors' answers to clinically-based questions. If we cannot offer immediate approval, generally the turnaround time for completion of these requests is within 2 to 3 business days upon receipt of sufficient clinical information. There are times when cases may take longer if additional information is needed.</p>
<p><b>Who is the “ordering/treating provider” and “facility/clinic?”</b></p>	<p>The ordering/treating provider is the therapist who is treating the member and performing the initial therapy evaluation. The facility/clinic should be the primary location where the member is receiving care. You will be required to list both the treating provider and the rendering facility when entering the prior authorization request in RadMD. If you are not utilizing RadMD, please have the information available at the time you are initiating your request through the call center.</p>
<p><b>Can multiple providers render physical medicine services to members if their name is not on the authorization?</b></p>	<p>Yes, the authorization is linked between the members ID number and the facility's TIN. As long as the providers work under the same TIN and are of the same discipline, they can use the same authorization to treat the member.</p>
<p><b>If the servicing provider fails to obtain prior authorization for the procedure, will the member be held responsible?</b></p>	<p>This prior authorization program will not result in any additional financial responsibility for the member, assuming use of a participating provider, regardless of whether the provider obtains prior authorization for the procedure or not. The participating provider may be unable to obtain reimbursement if prior authorization is not obtained, and member responsibility will continue to be determined by plan benefits, not prior authorization.</p>

	<p>If a procedure is not prior authorized in accordance with the program and rendered at/by an Ambetter from Sunshine Health participating provider, benefits will be denied, and the member will not be responsible for payment.</p>
<p><b>How do I obtain an authorization?</b></p>	<p>Authorizations may be obtained by the physical medicine practitioner via RadMD (preferred method) or via phone at 1-800-424-4909. The requestor will be asked to provide general provider and patient information, as well as some basic questions about the member's function and treatment plan. Based on the response to these questions, a set of services may be offered immediately upon request. If we are not able to offer an immediate approval for services or the provider does not accept the authorization of services offered, additional clinical information may be required to complete the review. Clinical records may be uploaded via <a href="http://www.RadMD.com">www.RadMD.com</a> or faxed to 1-800-784-6864 using the cover sheet provided.</p>
<p><b>How do I send clinical information to NIA if it is required?</b></p>	<p>The most efficient way to send required clinical information is to upload your documents to RadMD (preferred method). The upload feature allows clinical information to be uploaded directly after completing an authorization request. Utilizing the upload feature expedites your request since it is automatically attached and forwarded to our clinicians for review.</p> <p>If uploading is not an option for your practice, you may fax utilizing the NIA specific fax cover sheet. To ensure prompt receipt of your information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the NIA fax cover sheet as the first page of your clinical fax submission. *Please do not use your own fax cover sheet, since it will not contain the case specific information needed to process the case</li> <li>• Make sure the tracking number on the fax cover sheet matches the tracking number for your request</li> <li>• Send each case separate with its own fax cover sheet</li> <li>• Physical medicine practitioners may print the fax cover sheet from <a href="http://www.RadMD.com">www.RadMD.com</a> or contact NIA at 1-800-424-4909 to request a fax cover sheet online or during the initial phone call</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIA may fax this cover sheet to the physical medicine practitioner during authorization intake or at any time during the review process.</li> </ul> <p><i>*Using an incorrect fax cover sheet may delay a response to an authorization request.</i></p>
<p><b>What information should you have available when obtaining an authorization?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member name / DOB</li> <li>Member ID</li> <li>Diagnosis(es) being treated (ICD10 Code)</li> <li>Requesting/rendering provider type – PT, OT, ST</li> <li>Date of the initial evaluation at their facility</li> <li>Type of therapy: habilitative, rehabilitative, neuro rehabilitative</li> <li>Surgery date and procedure performed (if applicable)</li> <li>Date the symptoms started</li> <li>Planned interventions (by billable grouping category) and frequency and duration for ongoing treatment</li> <li>How many body parts are being treated, and is it right or left</li> <li>The result of the functional outcome tool/standardized outcome measure used for the body part evaluated. The algorithm is looking for the percentage the patient is functioning with their current condition. Example: If a test rated them as having a 40% disability, then they are 60% functional</li> <li>Summary of functional deficits being addressed in therapy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>If a provider has already obtained authorization and more visits are needed beyond what the initial authorization contained, does the provider have to obtain a new prior authorization?</b></p>	<p>Additional services on an existing authorization should NOT be submitted as a new request. If/when an authorization is nearly exhausted, additional visits may be requested as an addendum/addition to the initial authorization.</p> <p>To obtain additional services, clinical records will be required. Providers may upload these records through RadMD.</p> <p>If the member needs to be seen for a new condition, or there has been a lapse in care (more than 30 days) and care is to be resumed for a condition for which there is an expired authorization, providers should submit a new initial request through RadMD.</p>

<p><b>If a patient is seen by one discipline for two or more sessions in one day, does it count as one visit or more?</b></p>	<p>Each date of service is calculated as a visit. Example: If a patient is seen for group and individual physical therapy session on the same day, it will count as one visit towards the authorization.</p>
<p><b>What if I just need more time to use the services previously authorized?</b></p>	<p>A 30-day date extension on the validity period of an authorization is permitted and can be requested by utilizing the “Request Validity Date Extension” option on RadMD. Date extensions are subject to any benefit limits that may restrict the length of time for a given condition/episode of care.</p>
<p><b>If a patient is discharged from care and receives a new prescription or the validity period ends the existing authorization, what process should be followed?</b></p>	<p>A new authorization will be required after the authorization expires or if a patient is discharged from care.</p>
<p><b>If a patient is being treated and the patient now has a new diagnosis, will a separate authorization be required?</b></p>	<p>If a provider is in the middle of treatment and gets a new therapy prescription for a different body part, the treating provider will perform a new evaluation on that body part and develop goals for treatment. If the two areas are to be treated concurrently, the request would be submitted as an addendum to the existing authorization, using the same process that is used for subsequent requests. NIA will review the request and can add additional visits and the appropriate ICD 10-code(s) to the existing authorization.</p> <p>If care is to discontinue on the previous area being treated and ongoing care will be solely focused on a new diagnosis, providers should submit a new request for the new diagnosis and include the discharge summary for the previous area. A new authorization will be processed, and the previous will be discontinued.</p>
<p><b>Could the program potentially delay services and inconvenience the member?</b></p>	<p>We will make every attempt to process authorization requests timely and efficiently upon receiving a request from a provider. We recommend utilizing <a href="http://www.RadMD.com">www.RadMD.com</a> as the preferred method for submitting prior authorization requests. If your request cannot be initiated through our portal, you may initiate a request by calling 1-800-424-4909.</p>

	In cases that cannot be immediately approved, and additional clinical information is needed, a peer-to-peer consultation with the provider may be necessary and can be initiated by calling 1-800-424-4909.
<b>How are procedures that do not require prior authorization handled?</b>	If no authorization is needed, claims will process according to Ambetter from Sunshine Health's claim processing guidelines.
<b>Appeals</b>	
<b>Who should a provider contact if they want to appeal a prior authorization decision?</b>	Providers are asked to please follow the appeal instructions given on their non-authorization letter or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) notification.
<b>RadMD Access</b>	
<b>What option should I select to receive access to initiate authorizations?</b>	Select "Physical Medicine Practitioner" which will allow you access to initiate authorizations.
<b>How do I apply for RadMD access to initiate authorization requests?</b>	<p>Visit <a href="http://www.radmd.com">www.radmd.com</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Click on NEW USER.</li> <li>• Choose "Physical Medicine Practitioner" from the drop down box</li> <li>• Complete application with necessary information</li> <li>• Click on Submit</li> </ul> <p>Once an application is submitted, the user will receive an email from our RadMD support team within a few hours after completing the application with an approved username and a temporary passcode. Please contact the RadMD Support Team at 1-800-327-0641 if you do not receive a response within 72 hours.</p>
<b>How can providers check the status of an authorization request?</b>	Providers can check on the status of an authorization by using the "View Request Status" link on RadMD's main menu.
<b>How can I confirm what clinical information has been uploaded or faxed to NIA?</b>	Clinical Information that has been received via upload or fax can be viewed by selecting the member on the "View Request Status" link from the main menu. On the bottom of the "Request Verification Detail" page, select the appropriate link for the upload or fax.
<b>Where can providers find their case-specific communication from NIA?</b>	Links to case-specific communication to include requests for additional information and determination letters can be found via the "View Request Status" link.



<p><b>What does the authorization number look like?</b></p>	<p>The authorization number consists of at least 11 alphanumeric characters (i.e., 12345ABC123). In some cases, the ordering provider may instead receive a tracking number (i.e., 123456789) if the provider's authorization request is not approved at the time of initial contact, providers will be able to use either number to track the status of their request online or through an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone system.</p>
<p><b>If I did not submit the initial authorization request, how can I view the status of a case or upload clinical documentation?</b></p>	<p>The "Track an Authorization" feature allows users who did not submit the original request to view the status of an authorization, as well as upload clinical information. This option is also available as a part of your main menu options using the "Search by Tracking Number" feature. A tracking number is required with this feature.</p>
<p><b>Paperless notification: How can I receive notifications electronically instead of paper?</b></p>	<p>NIA defaults communications including final authorization determinations to paperless/electronic. Correspondence for each case are sent to the email of the person submitting the initial authorization request.</p> <p>Users will be sent an email when determinations are made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No PHI will be contained in the email.</li> <li>• The email will contain a link that requires the user to log into RadMD to view PHI.</li> </ul> <p>Providers who prefer paper communication will be given the option to opt out and receive communications via fax.</p>
<p><b>Who can I contact if we need RadMD support?</b></p>	<p>For assistance or technical support, please contact <a href="mailto:RadMDSupport@Evolent.com">RadMDSupport@Evolent.com</a> or call 1-800-327-0641. RadMD is available 24/7, except when maintenance is performed once every other week after business hours.</p>
<p><b>Contact Information</b></p>	
<p><b>Who can a provider contact at NIA for more information?</b></p>	<p>If you have a question or need more information about the physical medicine prior authorization program, you may contact the NIA Provider Service Line at 1-800-327-0641.</p> <p>You may also contact your dedicated NIA Provider Relations Manager:</p> <p>Andrew Dietz  Provider Relations Manager  1-800-450-7281, ext. 34646  <a href="mailto:adietz@Evolent.com">adietz@Evolent.com</a></p>

<b>Who can a provider contact at Ambetter from Sunshine Health if they have questions or concerns?</b>	Contact Ambetter from Sunshine Health Provider Services at 1-877-687-1169.  Providers may access the Ambetter from Sunshine Health portal at <a href="https://ambetter.sunshinehealth.com">https://ambetter.sunshinehealth.com</a>
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