

Radiation Oncology Solutions Program For Radiation Oncologists and Cancer Treatment Facilities Quick Reference Guide

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Revised: May 12, 2023

Beginning January 1, 2015, Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina entered into an agreement with National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA) to provide Radiation Oncology Solutions services for Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina membership. This program is consistent with industry-wide efforts to ensure members receive the most appropriate radiation therapy treatment in accordance with evidence-based clinical guidelines and standards of care.

The NIA program is managed through Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina’s contractual relationships with providers who deliver Radiation Oncology Solutions services. NIA conducts medical necessity reviews of requested services only for the following procedures in the RadOnc program for Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina members:

- All **Cancers** as well as **All Other Conditions** (i.e., Brain and Spine Lesions, AVM, Trigeminal Neuralgia) for Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT), Proton Beam and Stereotactic Radiation Therapy for all Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina’s membership.
- Prior authorization is required for all radiation therapy treatment modalities and the number of treatments/fractions for the course of treatments for procedures listed below based on Medical Necessity Review:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brachytherapy (Low-dose rate (LDR), High-dose rate (HDR) and Electronic ▪ 2D conventional radiation therapy (2D) ▪ 3D conformal radiation therapy (3D-CRT) ▪ Intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) ▪ Stereotactic Radiation Therapy (SRS and SBRT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proton beam radiation therapy (PBT) ▪ Intraoperative Radiation Therapy (IORT) ▪ Neutron Beam ▪ Hyperthermia
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- NIA provides utilization management services for all cancers and conditions; however, NIA does not manage the authorization for drugs associated with these services.
- Inpatient radiation therapy services are not impacted by this transition.

Important Notes Regarding Radiation Therapy Treatment Notification Transition of Care Guidelines:

- All radiation therapy treatments require prior authorization.
- The Radiation Oncologist determining the treatment plan and providing the radiation therapy is responsible for obtaining prior authorization. The Radiation Oncologist will be asked to provide a treatment plan related to the radiation therapy treatment planned for each member.
- For members currently in active treatment or if treatment is expected to continue beyond the effective date, a Radiation Therapy Treatment Form, located on NIA's website, RadMD.com and on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina website, must be submitted to NIA.

Obtaining Authorizations

It is the responsibility of the Radiation Oncologist ordering the radiation therapy treatment to contact NIA for medical necessity determination. Generally, you will receive notification within two business days of either approval or of the need for additional information required to complete a medical necessity review.

For additional details, please refer to NIA's clinical guidelines and disease-specific treatment plan checklists, available at RadMD.com. Since each medical necessity review request is performed specifically to the disease sites managed by the program, the information needed to complete the request will be specific to the diagnosis.

If additional information is requested, it can be uploaded to RadMD.com or faxed to NIA's dedicated clinical fax line at 1-888-656-1321. After all required clinical information is received to complete the medical necessity review, a determination will be provided generally within two business days.

It is the responsibility of the Radiation Oncologist and cancer treatment facility to ensure that radiation therapy treatment plan procedures are authorized before services are rendered. Reimbursement is based on approved treatment plans and techniques. Please refer to the document titled, "Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina Utilization Review Matrix" for a list of CPT codes that NIA authorizes for Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina. This matrix can be found on RadMD.com. Payment will be denied for procedures performed without a necessary authorization.

Breast Surgeons: The radiation oncologist is required to obtain a medical necessity review for **Accelerated Partial Breast Irradiation (APBI)**. The **breast surgeon** also requires a prior authorization and will receive approval for the insertion of the catheters if APBI is approved as medically necessary. The surgeon can request a review for approval at www.RadMD.com or call NIA's toll-free number at 1-866-500-7664.

Prior Authorization Process

There are two ways to obtain authorizations – either through NIA's Website at RadMD.com (preferred method) or by calling NIA at: 1-866-500-7664.

Information Needed to Obtain Prior Authorization

To expedite the prior authorization process, please have the appropriate information ready before logging into NIA's website, RadMD.com, or calling Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina's or NIA's Call Center.

- Name and office phone number of Radiation Oncologist planning and delivering radiation therapy
- Member name and ID number
- Primary disease site being treated
- Stage (T,N,M stage)
- Treatment intent
- Requested radiation therapy modality (initial and/or boost stages). E.g.
 - Total dose
 - Fractions
 - Guidance (IGRT, Port Films)
- Name of treatment facility where procedures will be performed
- Anticipated treatment and/or simulation date

Website Access

- **To get started**, go to RadMD.com, click the New User button and submit a RadMD Application for New Account by selecting “**Physician’s Office that Prescribes Radiation Oncology Procedures**”
- You can request prior authorization at RadMD.com by clicking the “**Request a therapy treatment plan**” link which is a part of your main menu options. RadMD is available 24/7, except when maintenance is performed every third Thursday of the month from 9 pm – midnight PST.
- The Radiation Oncologist can request medical necessity review for radiation therapy treatment at RadMD.com. RadMD is available 24/7, except when maintenance is performed every third Thursday of the month from 9 pm – midnight PST.
- The NIA website cannot be used for expedited prior-authorization requests during business hours. Those requests must be processed through NIA’s toll-free phone number 1-866-500-7664.
- If the Radiation Oncologist requests a medical necessity review through NIA’s website and the request is pended, the provider will receive a tracking number. NIA will contact the Radiation Oncologist to either complete the process or notify the provider of the medical necessity determination.
- **Pended requests:** If you are requesting prior authorizations through the NIA website and your request pends, you will receive a tracking number. You will then be required to submit additional clinical information to complete the process.
- **Authorization’s status:** You can check on the status of a radiation treatment plan quickly and easily by using the “View Request Status” link on RadMD’s main menu. In addition to the ability to view clinical documentation received by NIA, users can view links to case-specific communication to include requests for additional information and determination letters.
- 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

Quick Contacts

- Website: RadMD.com
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina website: www.SouthCarolinaBlues.com
- NIA toll-free prior authorization phone number: 1-866-500-7664



available as a part of your main menu options using the “Search by Tracking Number” feature. A tracking number is required with this feature.

Radiation Therapy Treatment Facilities

- Have the ability to view approved authorizations quickly and easily by going to the NIA website, RadMD.com. After sign-in, visit the **My Treatment Requests** tab to view all outstanding authorizations.

Telephone Access

The Radiation Oncologist may request medical necessity review by calling NIA at 1-866-500-7664;

Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST

Saturday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. EST

The NIA Call Center can accept multiple requests during one phone call.

- If you have questions and need more information about this Radiation Oncology Solutions program, you may contact the NIA Provider Service line at 1-800-327-0641.

Modifications to an Existing Treatment Plan

Please call NIA to speak with a representative who will process your request for modification. Your request will be reviewed for medical necessity, and you will receive notification from NIA generally within one business day once all required information is received to complete your request.

Submitting Claims

- Please continue to submit claims to Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina as you currently do today.
- We strongly encourage EDI claims submission. Payor ID Number is 401.

NIA Evidence-based Clinical Guidelines

Radiation oncology clinical guidelines can be found on NIA’s website at www.RadMD.com. These clinical guidelines for the use of radiation therapy treatment have been developed from practice experience, literature review, specialty criteria sets and empirical data.

- A prior authorization number is valid for 30 days from date of request. NIA will use the date of request as the starting point for the 30-day period in which the treatment must be completed. If the Radiation Oncologist needs to perform the initial simulation prior to the date of request, the validity period will be dated from the date of the initial simulation.
- The NIA authorization number consists of alpha-numeric characters.
- For physicians and cancer treatment facilities, only one authorization is needed for both the technical and professional components of each procedure.

If a member began *inpatient* radiation therapy and continues *subsequent outpatient* treatment **or if a member began radiation therapy prior to coverage by Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina, outpatient** radiation therapy will not require prior authorization for medical necessity review. Providers should fax a completed Inpatient Radiation Therapy Notification Form for each member to NIA at 1-800-965-6286.

- The Radiation Oncologist will receive an NIA tracking number (not the same as an authorization number) for tracking the request while it is in the process of medical necessity review. The tracking number can be used to either track the status of the request on RadMD.com, or via the NIA Interactive Voice Response telephone system.
- For complaints/appeals, please follow the instructions on the denial letter or explanation of payments.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina will retain ultimate responsibility and control over claims adjudication and all medical policies and procedures.

Disclaimer: A prior authorization number is not a guarantee of payment.