

Cardiac Imaging Frequently Asked Questions

Cardiac Studies for Louisiana Healthcare Connections

Why do some cardiac-related studies require prior authorization?

Prior authorization is required to minimize radiation exposure and promote the most appropriate test for the continuum of care.

When did the program begin?

The Louisiana Healthcare Connections cardiac prior authorization program began February 1, 2012.

How does the program work?

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

What cardiac-related imaging procedures are included in the Louisiana Healthcare Connections cardiac program?

Prior authorization through National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA) is required for the following cardiac modalities:

- CCTA
- Myocardial Perfusion Imaging (MPI)
- MUGA Scan
- Stress Echocardiography
- Echocardiography
- Left Heart Catheterization
- Cardiac Implantable Devices (defibrillator, pacemaker)

What additional services are provided?

- Evidence-based algorithms to support the best diagnostic options for each member
- Consultations with board-certified internists with specialized cardiac training and board-certified cardiologists related to elective cardiac diagnostic imaging when peer-to-peer review is required

What do ordering providers need to do?

Ordering providers need to obtain prior authorization for non-emergent, outpatient:

- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)/Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA)
- Computed Tomography (CT)/Computed Tomography Angiography (CTA)
- Positron Emission Tomography (PET)
- CCTA
- Myocardial Perfusion Imaging (MPI)
- MUGA Scan
- Stress Echocardiography
- Echocardiography (transthoracic and transesophageal echocardiography)
- Left Heart Catheterization
- Cardiac Implantable Devices (defibrillator, pacemaker)

Who administers clinical oversight of the cardiac program?

Board-certified cardiologists developed evidence-based clinical guidelines and algorithms that determine the best available diagnostic pathway. These physicians consult with referring physicians to apply these guidelines and algorithms to a member's specific symptoms and medical history. By determining the most appropriate clinical imaging protocol for each member, we can reduce duplicative testing, minimize member radiation exposure, shorten diagnosis time, and improve the overall health care experience.

Is there anything else I should be doing?

If you haven't done so already, please take a few minutes to register on www.RadMD.com. This portal gives you the most expedient way to process your authorization requests.

What happens if I need to have an inpatient or emergent cardiac procedure performed?

Louisiana Healthcare Connections continues to manage inpatient, and emergency cardiac procedures as is done today.

KEY PROVISIONS

- Emergency room and inpatient imaging procedures do not require prior authorization.