

## Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Musculoskeletal Care Management (MSK) Program Quick Reference Guide for Physicians/Surgeons

**Effective: Commercial - December 17, 2017, Medicare Advantage January 1, 2018**  
**Program Expansion: Cervical Spine – January 1, 2029**  
**Revised: September 2023**

Harvard Pilgrim Health Care has a partnership with National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA)<sup>1</sup> to provide utilization management for the Musculoskeletal Care Management (MSK) Program. This program includes prior authorization for non-emergent MSK procedures: outpatient interventional spine pain management (IPM) services; and inpatient and outpatient hip, knee, shoulder, lumbar and cervical spine surgeries. This decision is consistent with industry-wide efforts to ensure clinically appropriate quality of care and to manage the increasing utilization of these services.

The following types of services are included in the MSK program for all Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Commercial and Medicare Advantage members.

- Outpatient IPM
- Inpatient and outpatient hip surgeries
- Inpatient and outpatient knee surgeries
- Inpatient and outpatient shoulder surgeries
- Inpatient and outpatient lumbar and cervical spine surgeries

### Prior Authorization Implementation

As a provider of MSK services that require prior authorization, it is essential that you develop a process to ensure that the appropriate authorization number(s) has been obtained.

It is the responsibility of the ordering physician/surgeon and rendering facility to ensure that prior authorization was obtained, when necessary. Payment will be denied for procedures performed without a prior authorization, including the MSK surgery hospital admission, and the member cannot be balance-billed for such procedures.

### Procedures Requiring Prior Authorization\*

#### Outpatient IPM Procedures:

- Spinal Epidural Injections
- Paravertebral Facet Joint Injections or Blocks
- Paravertebral Facet Joint Denervation (Radiofrequency (RF) Neurolysis)

\*A separate prior authorization number is required for each procedure ordered.

<sup>1</sup>Effective 1/20/2023, National Imaging Associates, Inc. is now a subsidiary of Evolent Health. Evolent Health and its affiliates and subsidiaries collectively referred to as “Evolent.”

### **Outpatient and Inpatient Hip Surgeries:**

- Revision/Conversion Hip Arthroplasty
- Total Hip Arthroplasty/Resurfacing
- Femoroacetabular Impingement (FAI) Hip Surgery (includes CAM/pincer & labral repair)
- Hip Surgery – Other (includes synovectomy, loose body removal, debridement, diagnostic hip arthroscopy, and extra-articular arthroscopy)

### **Outpatient and Inpatient Knee Surgeries:\*\***

- Revision Knee Arthroplasty
- Total Knee Arthroplasty (TKA)
- Partial-Unicompartmental Knee Arthroplasty (UKA)
- Knee Manipulation under Anesthesia (MUA)
- Knee Ligament Reconstruction/Repair
- Knee Meniscectomy/Meniscal Repair/Meniscal Transplant
- Knee Surgery – Other (includes synovectomy, loose body removal, diagnostic knee arthroscopy, debridement with or without chondroplasty, lateral release/patellar realignment, articular cartilage restoration)

\*\*Surgeon must request surgery authorization for each joint, even if bilateral joint surgery is to be performed on the same date.

### **Outpatient and Inpatient Shoulder Surgeries:\*\***

- Revision Shoulder Arthroplasty
- Total/Reverse Arthroplasty or Resurfacing
- Partial Shoulder Arthroplasty/Hemiarthroplasty
- Shoulder Rotator Cuff Repair
- Shoulder Labral Repair
- Frozen Shoulder Repair/Adhesive Capsulitis
- Shoulder Surgery – Other (includes debridement, manipulation, decompression, tenotomy, tenodesis, synovectomy, claviclectomy, diagnostic shoulder arthroscopy)

### **Outpatient and Inpatient Spine Surgeries:**

- Lumbar Microdiscectomy
- Lumbar Decompression (Laminotomy, Laminectomy, Facetomy & Foraminotomy)
- Lumbar Spine Fusion (Arthrodesis) With or Without Decompression – Single & Multiple Levels
- Cervical Anterior Decompression with Fusion – Single & Multiple Levels
- Cervical Posterior Decompression with Fusion – Single & Multiple Levels
- Cervical Posterior Decompression (without fusion)
- Cervical Artificial Disc Replacement – Single & Two Levels
- Cervical Anterior Decompression (without fusion)

NIA will manage the MSK program through existing contractual relationships with Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. If an urgent/emergent clinical situation exists outside of a hospital emergency room, please contact NIA immediately with the appropriate clinical information for an expedited review. The number to call to initiate a prior authorization request is 1-800-642-7543

Please refer to NIA's website <https://www.RadMD.com> to obtain the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care / NIA Billable CPT® Codes Claim Resolution/Utilization Review Matrix for the CPT-4 codes that NIA authorizes on behalf of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care.

### **Prior Authorization Information**

To ensure that authorization numbers have been obtained, please adhere to the following guidelines.

#### **IPM:**

- Procedures performed in the emergency room or on an inpatient basis do not require prior authorization through NIA.
- Outpatient IPM services managed by NIA require a prior authorization for each procedure performed.
- It is the responsibility of the ordering physician to obtain authorization for all interventional pain management procedures outlined. Failure to do so may result in non-payment of your claim.
- Authorizations are valid for 30 days from the date of request.

#### **Outpatient and Inpatient MSK Surgeries:**

- Emergency musculoskeletal surgery (admitted via the Emergency Room) do not require prior authorization through NIA.
- Non-emergent outpatient and inpatient hip, knee, shoulder, and spine surgery services require prior authorization through NIA.
- **Note:** Any Harvard Pilgrim Health Care prior authorization requirements for the facility or hospital admission must be obtained separately and only initiated after the surgery has met NIA's medical necessity criteria.
- NIA's medical necessity review and determination is for the authorization of the surgeon's professional services and type of surgery being performed. NIA will provide Harvard Pilgrim Health Care with the surgery type requested and authorization determination.
- Authorizations are valid for 4 days from the scheduled date of service (inpatient) and 1 day from the scheduled date of service (outpatient).

### **Checking Authorizations**

You can check on the status of authorization requests quickly and easily by going to the NIA website, <https://www.RadMD.com>. After sign-in, select the **My Exam Requests** tab to view authorization requests and verify status.

**Submitting Claims** Claims continue to go directly to Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. Please send your claims for MSK procedures to the following address:

Harvard Pilgrim Health Care  
PO Box 699183  
Quincy, MA 02269-9183

Providers are encouraged to use EDI claims submission. (See [www.harvardpilgrim.org/providers](http://www.harvardpilgrim.org/providers) for details).

#### **Quick Contacts**

- Website:  
<https://www.RadMD.com>
- Toll Free Phone Numbers:  
1-800-642-7543

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

In this section NIA addresses commonly asked questions received from providers.

### **Where can I find NIA's Guidelines for MSK procedures?**

Guidelines can be found on NIA's website at <https://www.RadMD.com>.

### **Is prior authorization necessary if Harvard Pilgrim Health Care is not the member's primary insurance?**

Yes. Authorization is required if Harvard Pilgrim is secondary to another plan.

### **What does the NIA authorization number look like?**

The NIA authorization number consists of alpha/numeric characters (e.g., 1234X567). In some cases, the ordering provider may instead receive an NIA tracking number (not the same as an authorization number) if the physician's authorization request is not approved at the time of initial contact. Providers can use either number to track the status of their request on the RadMD website or via our Interactive Voice Response telephone system.

### **Who can I contact at NIA for questions, complaints, and appeals, etc.?**

Please use the following NIA contacts by type of issue:

- To educate your staff on NIA procedures and to assist you with any provider issues or concerns, contact your NIA Provider Relations Manager.
- Preauthorization and claims payment complaints/appeals: Follow the instructions on your non-authorization letter or Explanation of Benefit (EOB)/Explanation of Payment (EOP) notification.

### **How do referring/ordering physicians know who NIA is?**

Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and NIA share training and education materials with physicians and surgeons prior to the implementation. Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and NIA also coordinate outreach and orientation for providers.

### **What will the member ID card look like? Will it have both NIA and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care information on the card? Or will there be two cards?**

The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care member ID card does not have NIA identifying information on it.