

# Ambetter from Absolute Total Care Interventional Pain Management (IPM) Program Quick Reference Guide for Ordering Providers

**Effective February 1, 2024**

Beginning February 1, 2024, Ambetter from Absolute Total Care will expand its partnership with National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA)\* to provide utilization management for Interventional Pain Management (IPM) services on behalf of Ambetter from Absolute Total Care. This program includes prior authorization for non-emergent outpatient IPM procedures for Ambetter from Absolute Total Care members. This decision is consistent with industry-wide efforts to ensure clinically appropriate quality of care and to manage the increasing utilization of these services.

NIA will manage non-emergent outpatient IPM procedures through the existing contractual relationships with Ambetter from Absolute Total Care. Providers may begin contacting NIA on February 1, 2024, to obtain prior authorization for procedures below scheduled on or after February 1, 2024.

## **Outpatient IPM Procedures Requiring Prior Authorization Include:**

- Epidural Injections
- Facet Joint Injections or Blocks
- Facet Joint Neurolysis
- Sacroiliac Joint Injections
- Spinal Cord Stimulators
- Sympathetic Nerve Blocks

A separate prior authorization number is required for each procedure

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.

## **Prior Authorization Process**

The **preferred method** to submit prior authorization requests is through NIA's website [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com). Providers that are unable to submit their request through RadMD or for urgent requests needing expedited review, providers may contact our call center at 1-800-424-4920.

\*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."

Please refer to NIA's website [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com) to obtain the Ambetter from Absolute Total Care / NIA Billable CPT® Codes Claim Resolution/Utilization Review Matrix for all of the CPT-4 codes that NIA authorizes on behalf of Ambetter from Absolute Total Care.

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

Payment will be denied for procedures performed without a prior authorization and the member cannot be balance-billed for such procedures.

### **IPM Important Notes:**

- IPM procedures performed in the emergency room or on an inpatient basis do not require prior authorization through NIA.
- All outpatient IPM procedures require a prior authorization through NIA for each procedure performed.
- It is the responsibility of the ordering provider to obtain authorization for all IPM procedures outlined. Failure to do so may result in non-payment of your claim.
- Authorizations are valid for 60 days from the date of request.

### **Information Needed to Submit Prior Authorization Requests**

To expedite the prior authorization process, please have the appropriate information available before logging into NIA's website, [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com) or calling NIA's call center at 1-8002-424-4920.

(\*denotes required information):

- Name and office phone number of ordering physician\*
- Member name, date of birth, and ID number\*
- Requested procedure or CPT codes\*
- Name of provider office or facility where the service will be performed\*
- Anticipated date of service\*
- Details justifying the pain procedure\*:
  - Date of onset of pain or exacerbation
  - Physician exam findings and member symptoms (including findings applicable to the requested services)
  - Clinical Diagnosis
  - Date and results of prior IPM procedures.
  - Diagnostic imaging results, *where available*.
  - Active/Inactive conservative treatment modalities specific to the pain region in question that have been completed, with dates and duration, results (e.g., physical therapy, chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation, physician-based home exercise plan, hot pads, massage, ice packs and medication)
  - Documentation of member's pain levels (on a scale of 0-10) or impact on functional abilities

Please be prepared to upload or fax the following information, if requested:

- Clinical notes outlining onset of pain, conservative care modalities, outcomes and physical exam findings
- Date and results of prior IPM procedures
- Effectiveness of prior procedures on reducing pain
- Diagnostic Imaging results

Member symptoms, past clinical history and prior treatment information will be required and should be available at the time of the contact.

### Website Access

- **To get started**, go to [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com), click the New User button and submit a RadMD Application for New Account by selecting “**Physician’s office that orders procedures.**” Your RadMD login information should not be shared.
- If a user already has access to RadMD to initiate authorizations, RadMD access will allow users to submit an authorization for any procedures/products managed by NIA.
- You can request prior authorization at [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com) by clicking the “**Request Pain Management or Minimally Invasive Procedure**” 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.
- **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 status:** You can check on the status of prior authorizations 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 available as a part of your main menu options using the “Search by Tracking Number” feature. A tracking number is required with this feature.

### Telephone Access

- Call center hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST. You may obtain a prior authorization request by calling NIA at 1-800-424-4920.

### Submitting Claims

Claims will continue to go directly to Ambetter from Absolute Total Care. Please send your claims for IPM procedures to the following address:

Ambetter from Absolute Total Care  
P.O. BOX 5010  
Farmington, MO 63640-5010

#### Quick Contacts

- Website: [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com)
- Toll Free Phone Number:  
1-800-424-4920

Providers are encouraged to use EDI claims submission. Ambetter from Absolute Total Care payor ID number is **68069**.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

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

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

Guidelines can be found on NIA's website at [www.RadMD.com](http://www.RadMD.com).

### **Is prior authorization necessary if Ambetter from Absolute Total Care is not the member's primary insurance?**

Yes. Authorization is required if Ambetter from Absolute Total Care 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 physician 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. Physicians 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 Area Provider Relations Manager.
- Prior authorization and claims payment complaints/appeals: Follow the instructions on your non-authorization letter or Explanation of Benefit (EOB) /Explanation of Payment (EOP) notification.
- If you have questions or need more information about this IPM prior authorization program, you may contact the NIA Provider Service Line at: 1-800-327-0641.

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

Ambetter from Absolute Total Care and NIA are coordinating outreach and orientation activities.

### **What will the member ID card look like? Will it have both NIA and Ambetter from Absolute Total Care information on the card? Or will there be two cards?**

The Ambetter from Absolute Total Care member ID card will not have NIA identifying information on it.