May 28, 2010

Re: Outpatient Cardiology Diagnostic Imaging Services Update

Dear Participating Provider:

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is committed to provider collaboration and to continuing to help ensure that our members receive care that is consistent with recognized best practices. With that in mind, we would like to advise you about an upcoming change to our diagnostic imaging management programs administered by American Imaging Management® (AIM®).

Prior Authorization for Echocardiography
For those members whose benefits require prior authorization, effective for dates of service on or after September 1, 2010, prior authorization will be required for stress echocardiography (SE), transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), and resting transthoracic echocardiography (TTE). Prior authorizations will be required for the same members as currently required for advanced diagnostic imaging services. Servicing providers’ claims will adjudicate based on the results of the prior authorization review. For members whose benefits do not require prior authorization of these services, pre-notification will continue as a consultation management program requirement.

Prior authorization and pre-notification requirements will continue for cardiac and other diagnostic imaging services which are currently part of AIM’s program. A list of all cardiology services requiring prior authorization for those members whose benefits require a prior authorization review is included with this letter.

Beginning August 16, 2010, ordering providers may begin requesting prior authorization for SE, TEE, or TTE for dates of service on or after September 1, in one of the following ways:

- Online through AIM’s ProviderPortalSM at www.americanimaging.net/goweb, or,
- Through the American Imaging Management (AIM) Call Center at 866-714-1107.

AIM will issue an order number for services that are approved. As with other outpatient diagnostic services, we recommend that servicing providers confirm an order number has been issued before rendering services.

Voluntary Pre-Exam Questions (PEQs)
Please note that pre-exam questions will still be requested for stress echocardiography, coronary CT angiography (CCTA), cardiac positron emission tomography (Cardiac PET), and myocardial perfusion imaging (MPI). The purpose of the PEQs is to risk-stratify patients by identifying the common risk factors for cardiac disease. PEQs for resting transthoracic echocardiography, transesophageal echocardiography, cardiac MRI, and cardiac blood pool imaging have been removed for adult patients.

While the completion of the PEQs is voluntary, it is important to note that they facilitate the order review process for SE, cardiac CT/CTA, cardiac PET, and MPI as these exams are used to assess the risk of coronary artery disease. Completing the PEQs for these exams will reduce the time it takes to receive your order number. PEQs will not be requested for pediatric patients under the age of 19.
Enclosed with this letter is a clinical worksheet to assist you in preparing your requests (online or via phone) for MPI and SE.

**Collection of Post-exam Results**
We will continue to request post-exam results for all cardiac exams (including cardiac CT/CTA, cardiac MRI, cardiac PET, MPI, blood pool imaging/MUGA, and echocardiography). Currently, post-exam results for cardiac imaging are not available through claims data. We are requesting this information from providers for several reasons:
- To generate data reports that will aid in the clinical review of future cases
- To aid in the development of our quality management initiatives
- To collect data for future program enhancements
- To help providers better understand how they are performing compared to their peers
- To focus more attention on selecting the right test the first time for Anthem members

The collection of post-exam results is voluntary. If you do not wish to submit post-exam results for cardiac services that are performed it will not impact your requests for exams or claims payment.

**New Clinical Guideline**
Anthem’s Medical Policy Technology Assessment Committee develops clinical guidelines to address the appropriateness and medical necessity of technologies, applications and procedures. The following clinical guideline will be adopted effective September 1, 2010.

- CG-RAD-22 – Stress Echocardiography in the Outpatient Setting

We’d also like to note that we adopted the following clinical guideline effective March 1, 2010.

- CG-RAD-21 – Transesophageal and Transthoracic Echocardiography in the Outpatient Setting

We believe the changes that we have made to the cardiac imaging program further our objectives of providing a clinically appropriate, consistent and efficient case review process. For more information about our diagnostic imaging programs, visit [anthem.com > Providers > Connecticut > Diagnostic Imaging Management Programs](https://www.anthem.com).

If you have questions about these changes, please contact the Provider Call Center at: professional providers: **(800) 922-3242**, institutional providers: **(800) 345-2227**.

Sincerely,

Michael Yedziniak  
Manager, Professional Provider Relations

Roberta Addison  
Manager, Institutional Provider Relations

Enclosures