

Cardiac Imaging Frequently Asked Questions Cardiac Studies for AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania Plan Members



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 does the program begin?

The AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania radiological prior authorization program began on July 1, 2014.

How does the program work?

The cardiac imaging management program assesses imaging technologies used to diagnose and monitor patients 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 AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania program?

In addition to MRI/MRA and CT/CTA, prior authorization will be required for the following cardiac procedures:

- CCTA.
- Nuclear cardiology/MPI.

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

What additional services are provided?

- Evidence-based algorithms to support the best diagnostic options for each patient;
- Consultations with cardiologists related to elective cardiac diagnostic imaging when peer-to-peer review is required;
- Quality assessment of imaging providers to ensure the highest technical and professional standards.

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)
- PET scan
- CCTA
- Nuclear Cardiology MPI

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

Who will administer clinical oversight of the cardiac program?

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

Is there anything I should be doing before the program begins?

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 imaging requests.

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

Emergency room and inpatient imaging procedures do not require prior authorization. AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania will continue to manage inpatient and emergency cardiac procedures as is done today.