



National Imaging Associates, Inc. (NIA) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa providers

General Questions

What is the change to AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa's utilization management program?

Starting December 1, 2016, AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa is transferring the utilization management of non-emergent, advanced, outpatient imaging services to NIA. This decision is consistent with industry-wide efforts to ensure clinically appropriate quality of care and to manage the increasing utilization of these services.

What outpatient, non-emergent, advanced imaging services require providers to obtain a prior authorization through NIA?

- Computed tomography (CT) scan and computed tomography angiography (CTA).
- Coronary computed tomography angiography (CCTA).
- Magnetic resonance imaging and magnetic resonance angiography (MRI and MRA).
- Positron emission tomography (PET) scan.
- Myocardial perfusion imaging.
- Multigated acquisition (MUGA) scan.

Ordering providers must obtain prior-authorization of these procedures **prior to the service** being performed at an imaging facility.

Emergency room, observation and inpatient imaging procedures **do not require** prior authorization from NIA. If an urgent/emergent emergency clinical situation exists outside of a hospital emergency room, please contact NIA immediately at **1-888-864-7237** with the appropriate clinical information for an expedited review.

Which AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa members will be covered?

NIA will manage non-emergent outpatient imaging procedures for AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa members, including IA Health Link and Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa (*hawk-i*) members.

Prior Authorization Questions

Is prior authorization necessary for sedation with an MRI?

No, prior authorization is not required for sedation when performed with an MRI.



Is an NIA authorization number needed for a CT-guided biopsy?

No, prior authorization is not required for this procedure.

Are routine radiology services a part of this program?

No. Routine radiology services such as X-ray, ultrasound or mammography are not part of this program and do not require a prior authorization through NIA.

Are inpatient advanced imaging procedures included in this program?

No. Inpatient procedures are included in the authorization for the inpatient stay that is managed through AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa.

Is prior authorization required for imaging studies performed in the emergency room?

No. Imaging studies performed in the emergency room are not included in this program and do not require prior authorization through NIA.

How does the ordering provider obtain a prior authorization from NIA for an outpatient advanced imaging service?

Providers will be able to request prior authorization at www.RadMD.com or by calling NIA at **1-888-864-7237**.

What information is required in order to receive prior authorization?

To expedite the process, please have the following information ready before requesting prior authorization (*denotes required information):

- Name and office phone number of ordering physician.*
- Member name and AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa identification (ID) number.*
- Requested examination.*
- Name of provider office or facility where the service will be performed.*
- Anticipated date of service (if known).
- Details justifying examination, including:*

 - Symptoms and the duration of the symptoms.
 - Physical exam findings.
 - Conservative treatment patient has already completed (e.g., physical therapy, chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation, hot pads, massage, ice packs, medications).
 - Preliminary procedures already completed (e.g., X-rays, CTs, lab work, ultrasound, scoped procedures, referrals to specialist, specialist evaluation).
 - Reason the study is being requested (e.g., further evaluation, rule out a disorder).



Can a provider request more than one procedure at a time for a member (e.g., CT of abdomen and CT of thorax)?

Yes. NIA can handle multiple authorization requests per contact. Separate authorization numbers are issued by NIA for each study that is authorized.

What kind of response time can ordering providers expect for prior authorization?

Generally, within **two business days** after receipt of request with full clinical documentation, a determination will be made. In certain cases, the review process can take longer if additional clinical information is required to make a determination. Providers will be able to get the status on their prior authorization request at www.RadMD.com or by calling NIA at **1-888-864-7237**.

What does the NIA authorization number look like?

The NIA authorization number consists of eight or nine alpha-numeric characters. In some cases, the ordering provider may instead receive an NIA tracking number (not the same as an authorization number) if the provider's authorization request is not approved at the time of initial contact. Providers can use either number to track the status of their request online or through an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone system.

If requesting authorization through RadMD and the request is pending, what happens next?

You will receive a tracking number and NIA will contact you to complete the process.

Can RadMD be used to request an expedited authorization request?

No, those requests will need to be called into NIA for processing. The number to call to obtain a prior authorization is **1-888-864-7237**.

Can the rendering facility obtain authorization in the event of an urgent test?

Yes, if an urgent 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 obtain a prior authorization is **1-888-864-7237**.

How long is the prior authorization number valid?

The authorization number is valid for 60 days from the date of service. If there is no date of service, then it will be 60 days from the date of the request. When a procedure is authorized, NIA will use the date of service or the date of the initial request as the starting point for the 60 day period in which the examination must be completed.

Is prior authorization necessary for an outpatient, advanced imaging service if AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa is NOT the member's primary insurance?

No.



If a provider obtains a prior authorization number does that guarantee payment?

It is important that rendering facility staff be educated on the prior authorization requirements.

Beginning **December 1, 2016**, claims for CT/CTA, CCTA, MRI/MRA, PET scan, MPI and Muga scan that have **not** been properly authorized will **not** be reimbursed. The rendering facility **should not** schedule procedures without prior authorization.

Will the NIA authorization number be displayed on the AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa's website?

No. The authorization number will be posted in the provider's RadMD account.

Who should a provider contact if they want to appeal a prior authorization denial?

Providers are asked to follow the appeal instructions given on their prior authorization denial letter from NIA.

Scheduling Exams Questions

How will NIA determine where to schedule an exam for an AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa member?

NIA will manage non-emergent outpatient advanced imaging procedures through AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa's participating providers.

Why does NIA ask for a date of service when authorizing a procedure? Do physicians have to obtain an authorization before they call to schedule an appointment?

At the end of the authorization process, NIA asks where the procedure is being performed and the anticipated date of service. The exact date of service is not required. Physicians should obtain authorization before scheduling the patient.

Which medical providers are affected by the outpatient imaging program?

Any provider who orders or performs advanced imaging procedures in an outpatient setting.

Ordering providers will need to request a prior authorization and the delivering/servicing providers will need to be sure there is a prior authorization number in order to bill the service.

- Ordering providers, including primary care providers (PCPs) and specialty care providers.
- Delivering/servicing providers who perform diagnostic advanced imaging procedures at:
 - Freestanding diagnostic facilities.
 - Hospital outpatient diagnostic facilities.
 - Provider offices.



Claims Related Questions

Where do providers send their claims for outpatient, non-emergent advanced imaging services?

Providers should send claims to the address indicated on the back of their patient's AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa member ID card. Providers are also encouraged to follow their normal electronic data interchange (EDI) claims process.

How can providers check claims status?

Providers should check claims status at AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa's provider portal (NaviNet), which they can access at www.amerihealthcaritasia.com.

Who should a provider contact if they want to appeal a claims payment denial?

Providers are asked to follow the appeal instructions given on their explanation of payment (EOP) notification. AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa will continue to administer claims and the appeal process.

Miscellaneous Questions

How is medical necessity defined?

Medical necessity is defined as covered services determined through utilization management to be:

- Appropriate and necessary for the symptoms, diagnosis or treatment of the condition of the member.
- Provided for the diagnosis or direct care and treatment of the condition of member enabling the member to make reasonable progress in treatment.
- Within standards of professional practice and given at the appropriate time and in the appropriate setting.
- Not primarily for the convenience of the member, the member's physician or other provider.
- The most appropriate level of covered services, which can safely be provided.

Where can a provider find NIA's Guidelines for Clinical Use of Diagnostic Imaging Examinations?

NIA's Clinical Guidelines can be found on NIA's website, www.RadMD.com under "Online Tools/Clinical Guidelines." NIA's guidelines for the use of imaging examinations have been developed from practice experience, literature reviews, specialty criteria sets and empirical data.

To get started, simply go to www.RadMD.com, click the "New User" button and submit a "RadMD Application for New Account." Once the application has been processed and password link



delivered by NIA via email, you will then be invited to create a new password. Links to the approved training/education documents are found on the “My Practice” page for those providers logged in as an “Ordering Physician.” If you are an imaging facility or hospital that performs imaging exams, an administrator must accept responsibility for creating and managing all logins to RadMD. Your RadMD login information should not be shared.

Will the AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa member ID card have NIA’s information on it? Or will there be two cards?

The AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa member ID card will not contain any NIA identifying information on it. No additional card will be issued from NIA.

What is an optical character recognition (OCR) fax coversheet?

By utilizing OCR technology, NIA can automatically attach incoming clinical faxes to the appropriate case in our clinical system. We strongly recommend that ordering providers print an OCR fax coversheet from www.RadMD.com or call NIA at **1-888-642-7649** to request an OCR fax coversheet if their authorization request is not approved online or during the initial phone call to NIA.

NIA can fax this coversheet to the ordering provider during authorization intake or at any time during the review process. By prefacing clinical faxes to NIA with an OCR fax coversheet, the ordering provider can ensure a timely and efficient case review.

Who can a provider contact from NIA for more information?

Providers can contact Leta Genasci, Provider Relations Manager, at **1-800-450-7281, ext. 75518** or **1-314-387-5518**.

Providers can also contact their [AmeriHealth Caritas Iowa Provider Network Account Executive](#) or Provider Services at **1-844-411-0579**.