

Advanced Imaging Quality Initiative

Advanced imaging represents one of the fastest growing areas of healthcare costs today. Premera has made a commitment to partner with physicians to improve quality, reduce variation in care, and manage healthcare costs. As previously communicated via April 4, 2008 letter, Premera is implementing an Advanced Imaging Quality Initiative which becomes effective July 7, 2008.

The goal of this initiative is to help both providers and Premera ensure that advanced imaging scans performed on our members meet evidence-based guidelines. Premera has selected American Imaging Management (AIM) as the vendor to manage this initiative.

The Advanced Imaging Quality Initiative (AIQI) covers non-emergent advanced diagnostic imaging services performed in an outpatient setting for the following modalities:

- CT
- MRI/MRA
- Nuclear Cardiology

Attachment B contains the list of CPT codes included in this initiative. The code list is updated periodically to reflect changes published by the American Medical Association in the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Manual.

For procedures that are scheduled on or after July 7, 2008, all Premera ordering providers will be required to contact AIM to complete a Radiology Quality Initiative (RQI) request for the advanced diagnostic imaging procedures contained on the CPT code list and which are to be performed on an outpatient basis. Imaging studies performed in conjunction with emergency room services, inpatient hospitalization or rehabilitation, outpatient surgery (hospitals and free standing surgery centers) or 23-hour observations are excluded from this requirement.

Imaging providers are strongly encouraged to verify that an RQI request has been completed before scheduling and performing diagnostic imaging exams. In addition, imaging providers must submit ordering/referring provider information, per guidelines from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), in boxes 17 and 17b on CMS-1500 forms.

As we approach the July 7, 2008 implementation date, we will continue to provide information regarding the program. If you have questions regarding the Advanced Imaging Quality Initiative call Physician and Provider Relations at 1-800-722-4714, option 2, and then option 4. Watch for additional information and updates on www.premera.com/provider.

This packet contains the following attachments:

- A. AIQI Program Guide
- B. AIQI CPT Code List
- C. AIQI Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- D. RQI Provider Reference Sheet

Enclosures