

CT Scan Diagnoses

Recently the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) requested a review of the medical necessity of CT scans performed for Medicaid members. The review revealed that many diagnoses appear unrelated to the medical conditions/reasons for CT scans. Inaccurate diagnosis coding may result in the denial or recovery of services because the medical necessity of the scan can not be determined. Medicaid funds can only be used for services that are medically necessary.

Examples of inappropriate brain CT diagnoses include cellulitis of the toe, sunburn, osteoarthritis, lumbago, trigger finger, joint pain of the shoulder, cough, chest pain, screening mammogram, removal of sutures, varied fractures and sprains of the patella, wrist, tibia, fibula, hand and foot.

Examples of inappropriate spine CT diagnoses include malaise, convulsions, generalized pain, altered mental status, abdominal pain, ankle and foot fractures and sprained ankle.

Examples of inappropriate chest CT diagnoses include panic disorder, anxiety, hyperlipidemia, appendicitis, pain in the limb, memory loss, headache and diarrhea.

DMS is requesting all providers review their radiology billing process and bill claims with the appropriate diagnoses that supports the medical necessity of the procedure being performed. Future restrictions may be imposed if the medical necessity of CT scans continues to be unsupported by the diagnosis codes.