

February 1, 2019

Re: AIM Specialty Health Clinical Guidelines update – Musculoskeletal Program

Dear Provider:

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield and our subsidiary company, HMO Nevada (Anthem), is writing to inform you of the following updates to the AIM Specialty Health® (AIM) Clinical Guidelines. AIM is a separate company.

Effective for dates of service on and after May 18, 2019, the following updates will apply to the AIM Specialty Health Musculoskeletal Program Clinical Appropriateness Guidelines.

Spine Surgery – Enhancements as indicated by section below:

- General Requirements
 - Reporting of symptom severity: expanded to include IADLs as functional impairment
 - Tobacco Cessation: removed nicotine-free documentation requirement
- Cervical Decompression with or without Fusion
 - Added exclusion of cervical/thoracic laminectomy if criteria not met
- Lumbar Discectomy, Foraminotomy, and Laminotomy
 - Added criteria to define radicular pain for Lumbar herniated intervertebral disc
- Lumbar Fusion and Treatment of Spinal Deformity (including scoliosis and Kyphosis)
 - Added indication and criteria for Flat back Deformity
 - Added criteria for Isthmic spondylolisthesis
 - Added indication and criteria for Scheuermann’s Kyphosis
- Lumbar Laminectomy
 - Added exclusion of lumbar laminectomy if criteria not met
- Noninvasive Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation
 - Added risk factor criteria for cervical non-invasive bone growth stimulation

Interventional Pain Guidelines – Enhancements as indicated by section below:

- General Requirements
 - Reporting of symptom severity: expanded to include IADLs as functional impairment
- Therapeutic Epidural Steroid Injection
 - Updated time period of initial advanced imaging
 - Definition and frequency of repeat therapeutic epidural steroid injection
 - Updated maximum number of annual injections
 - Added criteria for subsequent injection after suboptimal initial response
- Paravertebral Facet Injection/Nerve Block/Neurolysis
 - Updated injection frequency limitations
- Diagnostic Intraarticular Sacroiliac Joint Injections
 - Updated pain reduction from initial injection

- Spinal Cord Stimulators
 - Added criteria for revision/removal of spinal cord stimulator
 - Separated criteria of trial stimulation and permanent stimulator implantation
 - Added exclusion of dorsal root ganglion stimulation

As a reminder, ordering and servicing providers may submit pre-certification requests to AIM in one of several ways:

- Access AIM **ProviderPortal**_{SM} directly at providerportal.com. Online access is available 24/7 to process orders in real-time, and is the fastest and most convenient way to request authorization.
- Access AIM via the Availity Web Portal at availity.com
- Call the AIM Contact Center toll-free number: 877-291-0366, Monday–Friday, 7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. PT.

Please note, this program does not apply to FEP or National Accounts.

For questions related to guideline updates, please contact AIM via email at aim.guidelines@aimspecialtyhealth.com. To access and download a copy of the current guidelines, go to: <http://www.aimspecialtyhealth.com/>.

We value and appreciate you as our partner in providing quality care, and appreciate your continued participation in our network.

Sincerely,



Allen Marino, M.D.
Medical Director
Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield