Health Policy and Economics

Tell Congress to Pass Medicare Inflationary Update Bill!
The Threat to the Soul of Interventional Radiology Escalated by COVID-19
VIDEO: How the iodine contrast shortage is impacting interventional cath labs

Novitas Claim Edits
Novitas will introduce smart edits to the electronic billing system. These edits will identify problematic claims sooner, provide clear notifications on fixing the claim error, and reduce time spent on claims submission. Novitas covers AR, CO, LA, MS, NM, OK, or TX. To learn more about the smart edits, click here.

SIR Launches RUC Surveys for September 2023 Meeting
The Society of Interventional Radiology (SIR) will circulate an American Medical Association/Relative Value Scale Update Committee (AMA/RUC) survey for MRI-monitored transurethral ultrasound ablation prostate, ultrasound elastography, CT guidance needle placement, and telehealth office visits. The data acquired through the survey process will be aggregated and analyzed to build value-based recommendations presented at the September 2023 meeting. If you receive the survey, please complete it as soon as possible.

The Multisociety Pain Workgroup (MPW) PVA commercial coverage
On May 1, 2023, the SIR submitted a comment letter to six commercial payers requesting a change in coverage policy for percutaneous vertebral augmentation (PVA) for osteoporotic vertebral compression fracture to mirror the current Medicare coverage determination. The medical necessity in these policies is limiting surgical procedures to fractures over six weeks old. Therefore, it should be revised/eliminated as these requirements can negatively impact patient outcomes and providers’ ability to deliver evidence-based, appropriate spinal care to all patients.

UHC UFE authorization
On May 26, 2023, the SIR submitted a comment letter to United Healthcare (UHC) asking for uterine fibroid embolization (UFE) to be removed from their preauthorization list. This is in response to their announcement of eliminating nearly 20% of procedures currently on their prior authorization list. UFE, backed by over 25 years of strong clinical evidence, should be removed from the preauthorization list as this process provides undue barriers to receiving appropriate, timely care for many women suffering from symptomatic fibroids.

Cigna delays implementation of modifier 25 policy
In April 2023, Cigna announced a new policy for evaluation and management services when a minor procedure was performed, it would require the submission of office notes and a modifier 25. SIR signed on to a comment letter with over a hundred societies urging Cigna not to implement this policy due to the negative impact on practice administrative costs, delay in claims processing, and the potential negative effect on our patients. As of May 2023, Cigna posted a notification in the policy stating, “Cigna will delay the implementation to require the submission of documentation to support the use of modifier 25 when billed with E/M CPT® codes 99212 – 99215 and a minor procedure. Cigna will continue to review for future implementation”. Cigna policy number M25

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