



MN008-T205
9900 Bren Road East
Minnetonka, MN 55343

July 7, 2020

John A. Wilson, MD, President
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
5550 Meadowbrook Drive
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Steven N. Kalkanis, MD, President
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
10 North Martingale Road, Suite 190
Schaumburg, IL 60173

Michael P. Steinmetz, MD, Chair
AANS/CNS Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral Nerves
25 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 610
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Your Inquiry About UnitedHealthcare's Prior Authorization Requirements for Uploading Radiographic Images

Dear Doctors Wilson, Kalkanis and Steinmetz,

Thank you for contacting us about UnitedHealthcare's prior authorization requirements for uploading radiographic images. In your June 23, 2020 letter, you shared your concerns about the new documentation requirements. We appreciate your insights and want to provide you some additional information.

We announced changes to our documentation requirements in the March 2020 Medical Policy Update Bulletin, which became effective in most states on April 1, 2020. The changes in documentation requirements were made to help our clinical team conduct clinical coverage reviews and better evaluate criteria based on medical policy and/or Milliman Care Guidelines® (MCG).

After the new requirements went into effect, we received additional physician, practice administrator and information technology staff feedback. During these discussions, similar concerns to those outlined in your letter were shared. Since that time, we have been engaged in open dialogue with multiple provider groups and medical societies about this topic. As a result, we are currently evaluating and refining our administrative processes to address and resolve the issues identified.

At this time, given the current technological difficulties in sharing required imaging, we are suspending denials on initial review for lack of information/lack of required images. In select cases, we may require images when they are necessary to determine if clinical criteria are met.

In the long term, we are committed to simplifying the image sharing process which will result in a more streamlined and efficient process. We invite you to join us in an ongoing, collaborative dialogue to reach the most effective and suitable solution.

Thank you for your feedback. If you have any additional questions, please contact me at russell.amundson@uhc.com or 952-406-4874.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russell Amundson MD", with a small rectangular date stamp "7-6-2020" placed over the signature.

Russell H. Amundson MD FAANS
Senior Medical Director
UnitedHealthcare Clinical Services

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