

# Outpatient Radiology Notification Protocol

- ▶ This Protocol supplements the provisions of the Physician, Health Care Professional, Facility and Ancillary Provider Administrative Guide pertaining to notification for outpatient imaging procedures.\* The notification requirements in this Protocol apply to all participating physicians, health care professionals, facilities and ancillary providers (“Physicians/Providers”) for Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedures.
- ▶ This Protocol is a prior notification requirement, not a precertification, preauthorization, or medical necessity determination. Notification under this Protocol is required for outpatient services only. Imaging services ordered during emergency room visits, in the observation unit or during an inpatient stay do not require notification.
  - Compliance with this Protocol is required. Incomplete notification and/or non-notification rates will be tracked through physician data sharing reports.
  - Without completion of the entire notification process described below, a notification number will not be issued. If the imaging study requested for the member is performed, and the claim is submitted without a notification number, an administrative claim reimbursement reduction, in part or in whole, will occur.
  - This Protocol is effective on the date noted in your notification letter.

## Ordering Physician/Provider:

- ▶ The Physician/Provider **ordering the imaging service** is responsible for obtaining a notification number prior to scheduling Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedures. Obtain the required notification number by contacting us via:
  - Online: **www.UnitedHealthcareOnline.com**
  - Phone: **866-889-8054**
  - Fax: **866-889-8061**

The information listed below may be requested at the time of the notification request.

## Member/Procedure Information

- Member's UnitedHealthcare ID number
- Member's name, address and telephone number
- Member's group number
- Member's date of birth
- The examination(s) being requested, with the CPT code(s)
- The diagnosis or “rule out” with the ICD-9-CM (or its successor) code(s)

\*Refer to [www.UnitedHealthcareOnline.com](http://www.UnitedHealthcareOnline.com) for the most current listing of CPT codes that require notification.

### **Physician/Provider Information**

- Ordering Physician/Provider name, Tax Identification Number, specialty, address, and telephone number
- Physician/Provider to which the member is being referred, if specified, and the address
- The contact person at the ordering Physician/Provider's office

### **Clinical Information**

- The member's clinical condition, which may include any symptoms, treatments, dosage and duration of drugs, and dates for other therapies
  - Dates of prior imaging studies performed
  - Any other information the ordering Physician/Provider believes would be useful in evaluating whether the service ordered meets current evidence-based guidelines, such as prior diagnostic tests and consultation reports
- ▶ If the requested imaging study is consistent with evidence-based clinical guidelines, a notification number will be communicated to the ordering Physician/Provider at the time of the request.

### **OR**

- ▶ If the imaging study requested for the member is not consistent with evidence-based clinical guidelines, or if further information is needed to assess the request, the ordering Physician/Provider participates in a physician-to-physician discussion to review the request, provide additional clinical information and consider alternative approaches. Upon completion of the discussion, the ordering Physician/Provider will confirm the procedure ordered and a notification number will be issued. The ordering physician maintains final decision authority.

The purpose of the physician-to-physician discussion is to facilitate the provision of evidence-based health care through an open dialogue based on clinical guidelines. This discussion is not a preauthorization, precertification or medical necessity determination.

A notification number will be communicated to the ordering Physician/Provider when the notification process is completed. The number will be communicated by telephone, fax and/or online, consistent with how the request was initiated. To help promote proper payment, this number should be communicated by the ordering Physician/Provider to the rendering Physician/Provider scheduled to perform the Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedure. Please note that the receipt of a notification number does not guarantee or authorize payment, but simply is confirmation that notification was made. Medical coverage/payment authorization is a separate process determined by the member's benefit contract and your agreement with us.

### **Urgent Care**

- ▶ Physician/Provider may request a notification number on an "urgent" basis if the Physician/Provider determines it to be medically required. A notification number will be issued for urgent requests within three (3) hours of UnitedHealthcare receiving all required information. If the Physician/Provider determines that care must be provided before a notification number can be issued on an "urgent" basis, the services should be performed and the notification requested retrospectively, following the Retrospective Notification process described below.

## Retrospective Notification

- ▶ If an Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedure is required on an urgent basis, or notification cannot be obtained because it is outside of UnitedHealthcare's normal business hours, the service may be performed, and notification can be requested retrospectively.
- ▶ Retrospective notification requests must be made within two (2) business days of the service.
- ▶ The ordering Physician/Provider should follow the same notification process outlined above for a standard request.
- ▶ Documentation must include an explanation as to why the procedure was required on an urgent basis or could not be prior-notified during UnitedHealthcare's normal business hours.

## Rendering Physician/Provider:

- ▶ To receive payment for services rendered, prior to performing the stated Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedures, the rendering Physician/Provider must:
  - Validate with UnitedHealthcare that a notification is on file by contacting UnitedHealthcare via:
    - Online: [www.UnitedHealthcareOnline.com](http://www.UnitedHealthcareOnline.com) > **Notifications > Radiology Notification Submission & Status**
    - Phone: **866-889-8054** (select prompt 2 to check status of a notification request)

If the rendering Physician/Provider determines there is no notification on file, the rendering Physician/Provider may contact UnitedHealthcare to obtain notification via the channels noted above. UnitedHealthcare will use reasonable efforts to work with the rendering Physician/Provider to obtain the notification from the ordering Physician/Provider prior to the rendering of services.

## Provision of Additional Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedures

- ▶ If, during the provision of an Advanced Outpatient Imaging Procedure, the rendering Physician/Provider determines that additional services should be delivered above and beyond the service(s) for which notification has been obtained, the rendering Physician/Provider should render those service(s) and obtain retrospective notification following the Retrospective Notification process described above.

## If the Ordering Physician is Non-Participating

- ▶ The rendering Physician/Provider may call 866-889-8054 and select option 5 to speak with a Customer Care professional. The Customer Care professional will assist with obtaining a notification number on behalf of the non-participating ordering physician.