

Effective October 1, 2003

Physician's Guide to Precertification Through American Imaging Management (AIM)

Health First Health Plans understands the increasing importance of high tech imaging studies for your patients' care. To ensure that these critical diagnostic tests are utilized in the most beneficial manner, a precertification program is being implemented through American Imaging Management (AIM) for members of Health First Health Plans. Effective for tests performed on or after October 1, 2003, **ordering physicians must obtain precertification for all non-emergent outpatient diagnostic imaging procedures listed on the attached document by following the procedures below:**

PRECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES:

TELEPHONE REQUESTS

- Call AIM's Precertification Department toll free at (800) 694-1005, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm EST; OR

FAX REQUESTS

- Complete the enclosed AIM provider fax form including all relevant information; OR

INTERNET REQUESTS

- Contact AIM's Website at www.americanimaging.net (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). AIM's online certification function is fully interactive, processing exam requests in real time using proprietary clinical criteria and assigning certification numbers for approved requests over the Internet. Ordering physicians and imaging physicians must register at www.americanimaging.net to begin using AIM's interactive website. Once a physician is registered, s/he can request precertification, verify that a precertification number was issued or is correct, and verify a member's eligibility. The content of our web applications is secured through Verisign at 128-bit encryption.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

AIM will require the following information for every request. Please have the member's chart or office notes available.

- Insurance information
- Member's name, HFHP ID number, and date of birth
- Ordering physician's name and address
- Name of imaging facility (where the procedure will be performed)
- Type of service and CPT code requiring precertification from AIM
- Reason (indication) for the imaging procedure and/or ICD-9 CM diagnosis code
- Results of pertinent previous studies (labs, x-rays, etc.) and treatments, including their duration
- Member's symptoms

Based on clinical criteria, AIM will either approve the request immediately and issue a certification number, or forward the case to a nurse or physician for review. The physician reviewer may contact the ordering physician to discuss the case in greater detail within one (1) business day of receipt of the request. Ordering physicians may also contact AIM's physician reviewer at any time during the precertification process. If the request is approved, AIM will contact the ordering physician with a certification number, which will be valid for 30 days from the date issued.

If the request cannot be certified based on available information and evidence-based criteria, it will be forwarded to a Health First Health Plans Medical Director for review. If the request is not approved, or if clinical documentation that has been requested is not received within 7 calendar days, a denial notice will be issued by Health First Health Plans to the ordering physician as well as the patient.

Please see the attached listing of imaging CPT codes that requires precertification from AIM.

Reviews of Non-Certified Procedures

If certification has been denied, you may contact a Health First Health Plans medical director to discuss the case by calling (321) 434-5613. Health First Health Plans members also have the right to appeal any coverage denial by following the detailed instructions contained in their denial notice.