

Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act

Prior Authorization Reform in Medicare Advantage

Goal: To increase transparency and streamline prior authorization in the Medicare Advantage program.

Requirements of Prior Authorization (PA) in Medicare Advantage (MA) Plans

- ❖ Establishes an electronic prior authorization process. Facsimiles and certain payor proprietary portals are not considered electronic PA transmissions.
- ❖ MA plans may not require PA on any surgical or other invasive procedure if this procedure is furnished during the peroperative period of a procedure that was already approved or did not require PA.
- ❖ The Secretary of HHS will establish a process for “real-time decisions” for services for which PA requests are routinely approved.
- ❖ MA plans must meet certain transparency requirements including:
 - Must submit to the Secretary at least annually (1) a list of all items and services that are subject to PA; (2) the percentage of PA requests approved during the previous plan year; and (3) the average amount of time elapsed between the PA request and the final determination.
 - MA plans must publish this information on a public website.
 - The Secretary must provide a biennial report to Congress.
- ❖ The Secretary will issue, through rulemaking, the following beneficiary protections:
 - MA plans should adopt transparent PA programs, developed in consultation with physicians, that adhere to evidence-based medical guidelines.
 - MA plans should conduct annual reviews of items and services for which PA is imposed based on an analysis of past PA requests and current clinical criteria that reflects the input of physicians.
 - MA plans should ensure continuity of care for individuals transitioning between coverage to minimize any disruption related to PA.
 - MA plans should make timely PA determinations, provide rationales for denials and ensure requests are reviewed by qualified medical personnel.
- ❖ Beneficiaries in MA plans are afforded the same protections as in traditional Medicare.