

NASS
ADVANCING GLOBAL SPINE CARE

EMERGING ISSUES IN REIMBURSEMENT EFFORTS FOR SPINE PROCEDURES

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A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK



REIMBURSEMENT EFFORTS AT NASS


BEHIND THE SCENES



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AREAS OF FOCUS FOR NASS

- Coverage Recommendations
- Payor Policy Reviews
- CPT and RUC



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COVERAGE COMMITTEE - MISSION

- Develop credible and reasonable coverage recommendations for spine care by proactively reviewing and incorporating existing NASS policy comments and Evidence-based Medicine guidelines to educate physicians and payors on fair coverage decisions.
- Health Policy Strategic Plan 2014
 - Too many policy reviews to do
 - If we were an insurance company what would we have as a policy?
 - Evidence informed, not necessarily dictated.
 - Guidelines “insufficient evidence” = punt
 - Coverage Recommendations = What is Reasonable?



COVERAGE COMMITTEE

- Co- Chairs:
 - Gary Ghiselli, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon
 - Scott Kreiner, MD, Physiatry
- 32 members (EMB training is required)
 - 15 Orthopedic Surgeons
 - 9 Physiatrists
 - 6 Neurosurgeons
 - 2 Anesthesiologists.



COVERAGE RECOMMENDATIONS - PROCESS

- 5-6 month process
1. Topics Generated
 - a. Committee works to generate list of topics: Email to NASS Health Policy team, Payer Policy Review Committee, Coverage Committee, Board
 - b. Topics are sent to Coverage Committee members who rank top 3
 - c. Priority list is sent to co-chairs who assign authors to topics
 - d. Assignment list is sent to members.



ONCE TOPIC IS ASSIGNED

- 2. Literature search is conducted
 - a. **Lit Search Request Form** is sent to medical librarian.
 - b. Abstract results are sent to the author who highlights the articles they want.
- 3. Article retrieval
 - a. Once all articles have been retrieved, staff liaison notifies author that articles can be accessed via our system. It is organized by topic and author.
 - b. Staff will also send the author the **Coverage Document Template**.
 - c. Will accept literature from companies too.



AUTHOR TIMELINE

- 1. Members will take 1-3 months to complete their initial draft.
- 2. Drafts are sent to staff liaison for basic formatting.
- 3. Drafts are reviewed first by the co-chairs.
- 4. Draft may be sent back to author for edits.
- 5. Once the author and co-chairs approve the draft, it is sent to the senior reviewers and Payor Policy Review Committee Reviewers.
- 6. Draft may be sent back to author for further edits.
- 7. The final draft is sent to the Executive Committee for review and approval.
- 8. EC members may send back to committee for more editing.

30 DAY COMMENT PERIOD

Upon EC approval, the draft is posted on spine.org for 30 day public comment period. All comments are emailed to coverage@spine.org.
 At the end of the comment period, the draft is removed from the website.
 Comments are shared with the co-chairs and author, and the draft is edited as needed. If edits are made, the draft will go through a 2nd senior/PPRC review and EC review.
 Once the EC approves the revised draft, staff works closely with co-chairs and author in preparing responses for each comment.
 The final coverage recommendations are now published!
 Each topic is published as an individual chapter, available on the NASS website free to all members

IMPACT

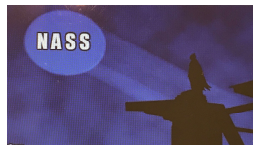
- Recent meeting with well known, long time stakeholder in the spine field
- Impact is "Profound!"
- In the last 2 years "policies only change if there is a NASS coverage recommendation."
- Other societies try it, but do not have the impact of NASS
 - "_____ is not NASS"

NASS BRAND

- Brand strength. "NASS says the truth."
- NASS acts as true 501(C) 3 looking out for **long term** best interests of: Members, patients and the field.
- Industry and their agents respect the integrity of the work product and its processes.... *While they work to change it!* (or at least, get it to work for them).

PAYERS ASKING FOR POLICY REVIEW

- Since October 14, 2016
 - 62 requests from 29 payers
 - BCBSA, CIGNA, AETNA, HUMANA, ANTHEM, UHC....
 - Combined total of 489 topics
 - Free to payers




TOP REQUESTED TOPICS	
Coverage Topic:	# of Requests:
Cervical Artificial Disc Replacement	30
Cervical Epidural Injections	26
SI Joint Injections	26
Lumbar Fusion	26
SI Joint Fusion	26
Lumbar Epidural Injections	25
Electrical Stimulation for Bone Healing	24
Lumbar Artificial Disc Replacement	24
Interspinous Device Without Fusion	23
Cervical Fusion	23
Facet Joint Interventions	22

TOP REQUESTED TOPICS	
Coverage Topic:	# of Requests:
Lumbar Laminectomy	21
Cervical Laminoplasty	21
Interspinous Fixation With Fusion	20
Laser Spine Surgery	20
Lumbar Discectomy	19
Endoscopic Discectomy	18
Percutaneous Thoracolumbar Stabilization	18
DNA-Based Scoliosis Test	18
rhBMP-2	17
Lumbar Laminotomy	16
Coccygectomy	13
Intrathecal Drug Delivery Systems	13
Spinal Cord Stimulation	5
Allograft & DBM for Spinal Fusion	4

USE IN THE FIELD

- Total number of free chapter downloads by NASS members: 3321
- Individual chapter purchases (\$395/chapter): 12



PAYOR POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

- Direct interaction with payers and government entities by reviewing and providing feedback on coverage decisions through appointed groups of subject matter experts. Advocate for NASS' position on various clinical practice issues including reimbursement, coverage and the provision of quality spine care.
- Mitchell Reiter, MD, Chair
- 33 members (EBM training required)
- 15 Orthopedic Surgeons, 8 Physiatrists, 5 Neurosurgeons, 2 Anesthesiologists, 2 interventional radiologists, 1 nurse.

PAYOR POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

- First review of an insurance company policy was done November 13, 2008
- Since then, 155 requests for specific reviews (incl. 21 new from eviCore)
- 117 completed (87%)
 - Short turn around – 2 weeks
- Better time frames now



32 DIFFERENT PAYER REQUESTS

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| ▪ Aetna | ▪ BCBS of MN | ▪ Medica |
| ▪ AHRQ | ▪ BCBS of No Carolina | ▪ Noridian |
| ▪ American Society of Neurophysiological Monitoring (ASNM) | ▪ BCBS Rhode Island | ▪ Novitas |
| ▪ Anthem | ▪ BCBS Vermont | ▪ Oregon HERC |
| ▪ Anthem BCBS | ▪ BCBSA | ▪ Premera BC |
| ▪ Baxano | ▪ Cahaba | ▪ The Bree Collaborative (Washington State) |
| ▪ BCBS Alabama | ▪ CGS Administrators | ▪ TRICARE |
| ▪ BCBS of IL | ▪ Cigna | ▪ UnitedHealthcare |
| ▪ BCBS of MI | ▪ CMS | ▪ WA State HTA |
| ▪ BCBS of Michigan | ▪ CMS NCD | ▪ Wellmark BCBS |
| | ▪ First Coast | ▪ WellPoint |

CPT AND RUC

- Our Health Policy Council and Coding Committee actively participate in the AMA's CPT Editorial Panel and Relative Value Update Committee (RUC) processes to ensure development of appropriate CPT codes for spine care services and procedures and subsequently to value the codes.
- NASS has advisors to both the CPT Editorial Panel and RUC who frequently work with advisors from other specialty societies to develop and present new and revised CPT code proposals and recommended code values.
 - Bill Mitchell, MD (NS) and Dave O'Brien, MD (PMR) - CPT Advisors
 - Karin Swartz, MD (NS) and Kano Mayer, MD (PMR) - RUC Advisors
- **Coding Committee** - Participates in the AMA's CPT Editorial Panel and Relative Value Update Committee (RUC) to ensure development of appropriate CPT codes and recommend values for spine care services and procedures. The Coding Committee oversees NASS' coding education activities including annual coding courses, member coding Q&A service and Common Coding Scenarios for Comprehensive Spine Care.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION – WHICH WAY TO GO???

- 8 orthopedic surgeons
- 2 Neurosurgeons
- 1 radiologist
- 1 Nurse
- 1 Coding professional

