

# Fast Facts

MARCH SPECIAL EDITION #3, 2020

News for Providers from HealthPartners Professional Services and Hospital Network Management

## Administrative

### HealthPartners Provider Portal COVID-19 Resources

#### REMINDER

HealthPartners has a landing page for up-to-date **COVID-19 information**. This page will be updated as changes happen during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

*(path: [healthpartners.com/provider-public/condition-resources/covid19/](http://healthpartners.com/provider-public/condition-resources/covid19/))*

#### TEMPORARY TELEMEDICINE POLICY DURING THE COVID-19 NATIONAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

To encourage broader use of virtual services during the COVID-19 National Health Emergency, HealthPartners has revised policies for the coverage of telephone and video visits and updated reimbursement for said services. These revised policies are intended to add clarity of coverage and to add additional eligible services for telehealth as follows.

- Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy services have been added.
- In accordance with actions taken by CMS, HealthPartners will allow non-HIPAA compliant audio-visual applications, such as Facetime and Skype, to be used for telehealth services.
- HealthPartners will waive the policy requirement of a visual component for telehealth, allowing for telehealth to be provided over the telephone.
- HealthPartners is temporarily suspending our policy requirement of telehealth and telephone services being provided only to established patients so that during the duration of the National Health Emergency related to COVID-19, telehealth and telephone visits can also be provided to new patients.
- Behavioral Health visits are described.
- In order to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, both the practitioner and the member can be located at their homes for telehealth and telephone visits.
- Please note that member responsibility will apply to telemedicine visits, E-visits and scheduled telephone visits per the member's certificate of coverage.
- We will continue to evaluate our telemedicine policy for updates as the National Emergency Continues.

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#### Important Links

##### Telemedicine Policy

Click on the *Access to telehealth* tab on the middle of the page.

*(Path: [www.healthpartners.com/provider-public/condition-resources/covid19/](http://www.healthpartners.com/provider-public/condition-resources/covid19/))*

##### COVID-19 FAQs

*(Path: [www.healthpartners.com/ucm/groups/public/@hp/@public/documents/documents/entry\\_223038.pdf](http://www.healthpartners.com/ucm/groups/public/@hp/@public/documents/documents/entry_223038.pdf))*

# Spine surgery practice provider update

## STARTING MARCH 2020

The **Spine Surgical Practice Low Back Pain Office visit policy** requirements have been revised (*path: healthpartners.com/provider-public/administrative-policies*).

- Low back pain patients with Medicare Advantage benefit coverage will be exempt from having to see a medical spine specialist prior to an initial surgical office visit.
- The Prior Authorization (PA) requirement has been changed to a Prior Notification (PN) requirement.
  - Spine Surgical practices must submit a completed prior notification form prior to seeing the patient for the initial office visit for low back pain. Go to **Forms for Providers**, click on Medical Policy and scroll down to Spine Surgery – Low Back Pain Office Visit Prior Notification.  
(*path: https://www.healthpartners.com/provider-public/forms-for-providers/*)
    - Office visits claims without prior notification by the surgical spine practice will be denied to provider liability.
  - Spine Surgical physician must attest that their low back pain patient has:
    - One or more of the exemptions for medical spine evaluation
    - Documentation of date and medical spine specialist seen.
    - Met or not met medical policy criteria for the surgical spine office visit.

Medical Benefit Coverage	
Prior Notification Required	Prior Notification Not Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial</li> <li>• Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicare Advantage</li> <li>• Medicare Supplement</li> <li>• Medicare Cost</li> <li>• MN Senior Options (MSHO)</li> <li>• Workers Compensation</li> </ul>

<b>Exemption for Medical Spine Evaluation - Please check all that apply</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member is less than 18 years of age
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member lives in exempt country. List Country: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member has progressive neurologic deterioration from lumbar spine condition. ICD-10: _____ Description: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Member has an exempt diagnosis. ICD-10: _____ Description: _____
<b>Medical Spine Center Evaluation - Please include documentation from visit</b>	
Medical Spine Center name: _____	
Medical Spine Specialist name: _____	
Date of evaluation: _____	
<b>Physician Attestation</b>	
The information is a true and accurate representation of my patient's current condition. I hereby incorporate this document into my patient's medical record. This document is supported by additional medical records in my patient's file.	
Medical policy criteria for surgical spine office visit has been <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met	
Physician or Treating Practitioner Signature: _____	Date: _____
Please note: A retrospective audit may occur to ensure compliance with HealthPartners policy.	

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the difference between Prior Notification and Prior Authorization?

*Prior Authorization is a protocol requirement to initiate HealthPartners' review of clinical information prior to the initial surgical spine practice office visit in order to determine a medical criteria coverage decision.*

**Prior Notification authorization is a protocol requirement to initiate an administrative approval based on the attestation of the surgical spine practice that the patient meets the exempt criteria or meets the medical criteria for coverage.**

### What happens if the Spine Surgeon doesn't get a prior notification for the first spine surgery office visit?

The office visit claim will be denied as provider liability to the spine surgeon's office. The provider denial letter will offer the appeal process to identify emergent or exempt condition

### Who does this the prior notification authorization requirement apply to?

- The PN requirement applies to low back pain patients with Commercial and Medicaid benefit coverage
- This requirement does not apply to low back pain patients with Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplemental, Medicare Cost MN Senior Options nor Workers Compensation benefit coverage.

### What does the Spine Surgeon do if the Patient has not seen a Medical Spine Specialist prior to the requested first lumbar spine surgery office visit?

- The Spine Surgeon would direct the patient to our Member Services area and ask for a Nurse Navigator. Nurse Navigators will give the patient information about the requirements and the **Designated Medical Spine Centers** available to them in the network.

## COMMUNICATION & RESOURCES

### ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY – SURGICAL CONSULTATION VISIT

- **Administrative Policies** ([path:healthpartners.com/provider-public/administrative-policies/](http://healthpartners.com/provider-public/administrative-policies/))
- **Prior Notification for Spine Surgical Practice – Low Back Pain Office Visits – Effective March 2020**  
([path:secure.compliance360.com/DMZ/ExternalLink/Go.aspx?PD=O8WBP3JVV9ZTB31%2fvTseUo63c1Bx94GWv8HqG5OIJnXrZV%2fMJ%2fW0mFd86zy7QQebOROCabkOetTctusXDh2ZEMBthfPnenstakr%2f8dmzJ6RMsvuWZJ7FIA%3d%3d](http://secure.compliance360.com/DMZ/ExternalLink/Go.aspx?PD=O8WBP3JVV9ZTB31%2fvTseUo63c1Bx94GWv8HqG5OIJnXrZV%2fMJ%2fW0mFd86zy7QQebOROCabkOetTctusXDh2ZEMBthfPnenstakr%2f8dmzJ6RMsvuWZJ7FIA%3d%3d))

## MEDICAL POLICY

### Spine Surgery Consult Visit

- **Spine Surgery Consult Visit Policy**  
([path: healthpartners.com/public/coverage-criteria/policy.html?contentid=AENTRY\\_046157](http://healthpartners.com/public/coverage-criteria/policy.html?contentid=AENTRY_046157))
- **Spine Surgery Consult Visit Medical Review form**  
([path: healthpartners.com/ucm/groups/public/@hp/@public/@cc/documents/documents/dev\\_058728.pdf](http://healthpartners.com/ucm/groups/public/@hp/@public/@cc/documents/documents/dev_058728.pdf))

### Spine Surgery Procedures

- **Spine Fusion - Lumbar Policy**  
([path: healthpartners.com/public/coverage-criteria/policy.html?contentid=AENTRY\\_046153](http://healthpartners.com/public/coverage-criteria/policy.html?contentid=AENTRY_046153))
- **Spine Fusion Lumbar Medical Review Form**  
([path: healthpartners.com/ucm/groups/public/@hp/@public/@cc/documents/documents/dev\\_059909.pdf](http://healthpartners.com/ucm/groups/public/@hp/@public/@cc/documents/documents/dev_059909.pdf))
- **Spine Lumbar Laminectomy Surgery**  
([path: healthpartners.com/public/coverage-criteria/policy.html?contentid=AENTRY\\_046155](http://healthpartners.com/public/coverage-criteria/policy.html?contentid=AENTRY_046155))

If you have questions regarding the content of this newsletter, please contact the person indicated in the article or call your HealthPartners Service Specialist. If you don't have his/her phone number, please call **952-883-5589** or toll-free at **888-638-6648**. This newsletter is available online at [healthpartners.com/fastfacts](http://healthpartners.com/fastfacts).

**Fast Facts Editors:** Mary Jones and David Ohmann