

## SWHP- American Imaging Management® Expanded Cardiac Services Diagnostic Imaging Management Frequently Asked Questions

### **Program Overview**

**Q. Why is Scott & White Health Plan expanding its outpatient Radiology Quality Initiative (RQI) to include additional cardiac services?**

- A. Scott & White Health Plan (SWHP) is committed to the goals of improving patient care and managing costs. In reviewing the utilization of the echocardiography services that have been added to the program, SWHP found wide variation in the ordering pattern for these services as well as significant and unsustainable growth.

SWHP is expanding the existing RQI program in order to improve appropriate use of these services by introducing clinical review based on widely accepted clinical guidelines. Similar to the existing RQI program, the ultimate decision as to whether or not to order these services will remain with the Ordering Provider. However, it is SWHP's expectation that the addition of clinical review will reduce variability as practice standards coalesce around the clinical guidelines of the RQI program.

**Q. How were the clinical criteria for the program developed?**

- A: The clinical guidelines used for the program were developed following an extensive review of current clinical literature, guidelines and appropriateness criteria regarding cardiac imaging. The guidelines are heavily influenced by appropriateness criteria issued by the American College of Cardiology.

In addition to review by AIM and the medical directors of AIM's clients, the guidelines were developed with extensive input from an external advisory panel composed of leading cardiologists representing both academic and private practice backgrounds.

### **Program Design and Requirements**

**Q. What cardiac diagnostic imaging exams are being added to the RQI program?**

- A: The exams that are being added to SWHP's radiology management program include the following: stress, resting transthoracic, and transesophageal echocardiography.

**Q. When will the expanded program begin?**

- A. AIM's call center and *ProviderPortal*<sup>SM</sup> website will begin accepting order requests for the new cardiac modalities beginning **October 5, 2009**. Order requests are to be submitted for those services that are to be performed **on or after October 19, 2009**.

## **Scott & White Health Plan Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)**

**Q. How does a physician office staff member obtain an Order ID number from AIM?**

A. There are two ways to obtain an Order ID number:

- By registering at AIM's website: <https://www.providerportal.com>. After registration, a provider can follow the easy-to-use online process to request an order ID number through **ProviderPortal** – AIM's interactive Internet application
- By calling AIM at **866-714-1104**

**Q. Will the clinical review process for the new cardiac imaging modalities be similar to the one currently used for the RQI program?**

A. Yes, the clinical review process for the new modalities will be similar to the one used for the cardiac imaging modalities that are currently included in the RQI program. Ordering provider offices will be required to submit certain member demographic information and information concerning the member's clinical condition in order to complete the RQI process.

The primary change that providers will see under the new program will be the addition of post-exam questions designed to provide information regarding the results of the exam.

**Q. What post-exam questions will be asked and why does SWHP need this information?**

A. Beginning with services provided on and after **October 19, 2009**, either the Ordering or Servicing provider will be asked respond to two questions regarding the results of the requested cardiac imaging studies. SWHP is requesting post-exam results to generate data reports that will aid in the clinical review of future cases as well as in the development of our quality management initiatives.

Post-delivery questions and response options will be asked for every cardiac exam included under the program (i.e. the new echocardiography modalities and the cardiac modalities currently included in the program: MPI, blood pool imaging/MUGA, cardiac MRI, PET, and CT/CTA). The questions will include the following:

1. Categorize the exam results (choose one).
  - Normal
  - Abnormal (related to reason examination ordered)
  - Abnormal (unrelated to reason examination ordered)
  - Inconclusive
2. Did this study conclude the investigation for the suspected diagnosis that prompted the test or was subsequent imaging required?
  - Concluded investigation
  - Subsequent imaging required

**Q. What is the imaging providers' role for these additional cardiac imaging services?**

A. As with other outpatient diagnostic services, we recommend that servicing providers confirm that an RQI/Order Number has been issued before rendering services.