

CMS Final Decision on PET in Solid Tumors

On Tuesday, June 11, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released a final decision ending the coverage with evidence development (CED) requirement for ¹⁸F-FDG PET imaging of solid tumors (CAG-00181R4). The final decision removed the requirement for prospective data collection by the National Oncologic PET Registry (NOPR) for those cancers or cancer types that had been previously covered under CED. As a result, NOPR closed for collection of PET data on solid tumors on the same day as the announcement. However, a second NOPR registry on NaF PET imaging is now actively collecting data.

In a significant expansion of coverage for PET imaging, CMS announced that 3 ¹⁸F-FDG PET scans are now covered when used to guide management of antitumor treatment strategy after completion of initial anticancer therapy. Coverage of any additional scans (i.e., more than 3) used to guide subsequent management of antitumor treatment strategy after completion of initial antitumor therapy will be determined by local Medicare Administrative Contractors

(MACs). The full posting is available at: www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/nca-decision-memo.aspx?NCAId=263. Table 1 summarizes national ¹⁸F-FDG PET coverage for oncologic conditions effective for claims with dates of service after June 11, 2013.

On June 19, SNMMI and NOPR cosponsored a Webinar on the coverage changes, hosted by Barry Siegel, MD, NOPR co-chair and professor at the University of Washington (St. Louis, MO), and Denise Merlino, MBA, CNMT, CPC, from Merlino Healthcare Consulting Corporation (Magnolia, MA). The Webinar included detailed information on the CMS final coverage decision; logistics for NOPR PET studies with dates of service before and immediately after the final decision; and an introduction to the NOPR NaF PET registry. Frequently asked questions were reviewed, and questions from participants were answered. The complete Webinar, including detailed analyses of the expanded coverage, is available at: www.cancerpetregistry.org/pdf/FinalNOPR-PET-Webinar-6-19-2013.pdf.

TABLE 1
¹⁸F-FDG PET for Solid Tumors and Myeloma National Coverage as of June 11, 2013

Tumor type	Initial treatment strategy (formerly diagnosis and staging)	Subsequent treatment strategy (Formerly restaging and monitoring response to treatment)
Colorectal	Cover	Cover
Esophagus	Cover	Cover
Head and neck (not thyroid or CNS)	Cover	Cover
Lymphoma	Cover	Cover
Non-small cell lung	Cover	Cover
Ovary	Cover	Cover
Brain	Cover	Cover
Cervix	Cover with exceptions*	Cover
Small-cell lung	Cover	Cover
Soft tissue sarcoma	Cover	Cover
Pancreas	Cover	Cover
Testes	Cover	Cover
Prostate	Noncover	Cover
Thyroid	Cover	Cover
Breast (male & female)	Cover with exceptions**	Cover
Melanoma	Cover with exceptions†	Cover
All other solid tumors	Cover	Cover
Myeloma	Cover	Cover
All other cancers not listed	Cover	Cover

*Cervix: Nationally noncovered for the initial diagnosis of cervical cancer related to initial antitumor treatment strategy. All other indications for initial antitumor treatment strategy for cervical cancer are nationally covered.

**Breast: Nationally noncovered for initial diagnosis and/or staging of axillary lymph nodes. Nationally covered for initial staging of metastatic disease. All other indications for initial antitumor treatment strategy for breast cancer are nationally covered.

†Melanoma: Nationally noncovered for initial staging of regional lymph nodes. All other indications for initial antitumor treatment strategy for melanoma are nationally covered.