

Please circulate to others and file in your *Provider Manual* for future reference.

Community Health Group (CHG) would like to ask our PCP partners for your assistance with an important HEDIS measure concerning the *Appropriate Use of Imaging Studies for Low Back Pain*. This HEDIS measure is used to assess the percentage of members between 18 and 50 years of age who had a **primary diagnosis of low back pain** and **who did not have an imaging study** (X-ray, MRI or CT scan) within 28 days of diagnosis.

As part of our HEDIS campaign, we would like to remind you that during the initial assessment of your patients with low back pain, clinical guidelines recommend focusing on obtaining a complete medical history and physical examination. The history and physical examination will generally provide **exclusions** to rare but potentially serious causes of low back pain and identify if a patient is at risk for chronic disabling back pain. Below is a list of the physical exclusions which may exclude these patients from this HEDIS measure. To be excluded, CHG needs to receive an encounter/claim with the appropriate diagnosis code.

Exclusion
Cancer
Trauma
IV drug abuse
Neurologic impairment

We encourage our providers to use conservative methods of treatment prior to ordering imaging studies such as non-narcotic medications, physical therapy, and chiropractic services. Imaging study should only be given when clinical medical necessity is warranted.

Please note that this measure does not involve chart review; it is based only on claims and encounter data submitted to CHG.

