

CMS Decision for FDG PET for Cervical Cancer

On August 13, 2009 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced a proposed decision to cover FDG PET for initial staging of cervical cancer. CMS further proposes to exclude coverage for diagnosis of cervical cancer. This is consistent with the requestors reconsideration sent to CMS on April 14, 2009 as well as the response by the SNM in a joint society letter sent July 2, 2009.

Background and CMS Decision Summary (CAG-00181R2) for FDG PET for Cervical Cancer:

CMS was asked to reconsider Section 220.6 of the National Coverage Determinations Manual to end the prospective data collection requirements for FDG PET for initial staging of cervical cancer. CMS proposes that the evidence is adequate to determine that the results of FDG PET imaging for cervical cancer staging of beneficiaries diagnosed with cervical cancer are used by the treating physician to make meaningful changes in therapeutic management and improve health outcomes, and thus are reasonable and necessary under §1862(a)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act.

Therefore, CMS proposes to cover only one FDG PET for staging in beneficiaries who have biopsy proven cervical cancer when the beneficiary's treating physician determines that the FDG PET study is needed to determine the location and/or extent of the tumor for the following therapeutic purposes related to the initial treatment strategy:

- To determine whether or not the beneficiary is an appropriate candidate for an invasive diagnostic or therapeutic procedure; or
- To determine the optimal anatomic location for an invasive procedure; or
- To determine the anatomic extent of tumor when the recommended anti-tumor treatment reasonably depends on the extent of the tumor.

The requestor also noted that "CMS may find it appropriate to exclude coverage for diagnosis of cervical cancer since this disorder is initially diagnosed by biopsy." CMS agrees and proposes that there is no credible evidence that the results of FDG PET imaging are useful to make the initial diagnosis of cervical cancer, and therefore do not improve health outcomes, and thus are not reasonable and necessary under §1862(a)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act. Therefore CMS proposes to non-cover FDG PET for this indication.