

# Time for physicians to prepare for impending appropriate use mandate

27 February 2017

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Within a year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will implement a provision in the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) that requires physicians to consult appropriate use criteria (AUC) using CMS-approved computer-based clinical decision support mechanisms when ordering advanced imaging procedures.

Under PAMA, [providers](#) will have to submit proof that applicable AUC were consulted to have their claims processed. After the CMS collects 2 years of data, "outlier" [physicians](#) will be subject to prior authorization, thus possibly limiting patients' and physicians' access to advanced imaging procedures.

Because [coronary artery disease](#) evaluation is a priority clinical area, most cardiac imaging procedures will be subject to the initial rollout of the mandate.

Once PAMA is implemented, the burden of reducing inappropriate use will move largely from payers to providers. In preparation for this shift, physicians will need to be educated about expectations under PAMA, which should include increasing their understanding of appropriate use.

This will require close collaboration between professional societies representing referring providers and imaging specialists and involvement of all stakeholders.

**More information:** *Annals of Internal Medicine*, <http://annals.org/aim/article/doi/10.7326/M16-2673>

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