

April 2026

Attention: Radiology Providers

Impact of Billing Practices on HEDIS Quality Outcomes for Low Back Pain Imaging Studies

To improve quality care and adhere to industry standards, we are sharing updates made to the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS^{®1}) quality outcomes related to low back pain imaging studies. The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA²) updated technical specifications (2025) for the Use of Imaging Studies for Low Back Pain (LBP).

Previously, imaging claims from your practice did not affect LBP measure's denominator. However, per the latest specifications, these claims now contribute to the denominator, potentially impacting patient inclusion in the measure which may affect HEDIS quality outcomes.

Recommendations for Accurate Billing Practices

To ensure accurate reporting and optimal patient care, we encourage you to review and adjust your billing practices as follows:

- When submitting claims for imaging studies related to low back pain, ensure all ICD-10 codes from the referral are accurately captured and submitted, including any applicable exclusion codes.
- Verify the ICD-10 codes accurately reflect the patient's condition and the reason for the imaging study.

For example, if a patient presents with low back pain and has a documented history of trauma within the last 90 days, please ensure the ICD-10 code for the trauma (e.g., G89.11 – Acute Pain Due to Trauma) is included in the claim, in addition to the code for low back pain (e.g., M54.5 - Low back pain). This will accurately exclude the patient from the HEDIS measure.

By capturing all relevant ICD-10 codes, including exclusion codes, we can ensure patients are correctly excluded from the population being measured, and your patients' care is accurately represented.

This change is essential to maintaining the integrity of HEDIS measures and ensuring our organization is reporting accurate quality data. We appreciate your cooperation and attention to this matter.

Resources

For additional information, refer to the following resources:

- [Use of Imaging Studies for Low Back Pain \(LBP\)](#) Florida Blue HEDIS Tip Sheet
- [NCQA Website: Low Back Pain](#)

If you have questions, please contact us at HEDISInnovations@BCBSFL.com.

¹HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

²NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations and manages the evolution of HEDIS, the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. Visit ncqa.org for more information.