

Effective January 1, 2020, the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) **requires** referring providers to consult appropriate use criteria (AUC) prior to ordering advanced diagnostic imaging services (ADIS) including CT, MR, Nuclear Medicine and PET. It is important to note that the law does not mandate ordering providers to strictly adhere to the AUC, just consult AUC. We are highlighting this requirement to ensure the implementation process goes smoothly and your patients continue to receive the best quality care.

An AUC consult via a [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services \(CMS\) qualified clinical decision support mechanism](#) (CDSM) must be documented. Without a documented consult, rendering providers (both facilities and radiologists) will not receive Medicare payment for the procedure. CMS finalized an “education and operations testing period” that will run from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, where there will be no penalties for incorrect reporting.

Note that while integrated CDS systems may be incorporated into your current EHR system workflow, there are also free online portal CDSM options that may be used at no cost to you. The qCDSMs with free options are noted on the CMS list in the above link.

Radiology practices, like MDI are required to report which CDSM was consulted, the results of the consultation (adhere, not adhere or not applicable) and the tax identification number (TIN) of the referring physician. We ask that you please provide this information to our office when ordering advanced diagnostic imaging studies in order to avoid unnecessary delays in patient care starting **January 1, 2020**.

We wish to be an ongoing resource for you during this implementation process. We expect additional resources to be released by CMS in the near future. Further information can be found on the American College of Radiology [website](#). Should you have questions about the new requirement, please reach out to our office to discuss. You may also reach out to the American College of Radiology at PAMA-AUC@acr.org.

Thank you for your attention to this matter in order to ensure the most appropriate and best possible care for our patients.