Evidence Based Clinical Information To Support A Spinal Surgery Authorization Request
Evidence Based Clinical Information to Support An Authorization Request for Spinal Surgery

The following information about a patient’s current and past medical history, corresponds to the evidence based medical necessity criteria that peer review physicians use to review requests for spinal surgery. Including such information, as appropriate, to support the request for authorization of spinal surgery helps the peer review physician confirm that the corresponding evidence based medical necessity criteria for the procedure have been met.

1. Specific diagnoses associated with the patient’s condition (e.g., fracture, infection, tumor, deformity, spinal stenosis, disc herniation, spondylolisthesis, etc.).

2. Clear history of symptoms (neck or back, radicular/neurologic symptoms), date of onset, duration, functional limitations.

3. Prior medical history, including prior spine surgery. For lumbar fusion, include any psychological barriers, smoking, elevated BMI. If a psych history exists and lumbar fusion is requested, need psychological clearance.

4. Exam (including neck or back, upper and/or lower extremity motor, reflex, sensory exam, provocative maneuvers like SLRT).

5. Imaging studies, including x-rays, MRI, CT, EMG (prefer radiology or EMG report rather than requesting provider summary).

6. Treatment, including medications (e.g., opioids, NSAIDS, muscle relaxants), PT or chiropractic (include treatment duration and number of visits), injections (include specific type(s) of injections, e.g., epidural, facet joint, SI joint, as well as level at which performed and dates), implants, and home exercise program.

7. Description of the surgery request (e.g., decompression, vertebral levels, fusion, instrumentation), including fusion rationale for fusion vs. decompression (e.g. spondylolisthesis, instability on dynamic x-rays), and justification for spinal fusion to be performed with decompression, if requested.

Please fax your clinical notes to our Focus-only fax line: 617-586-1600