



An Independent Licensee of the
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



Federal Employee Program.

Healthcare Quality Improvement
P.O. Box 1798
Jacksonville, FL 32231

<Date>

<Providers name>

<Street Address>

<Street Address>

<City, State Zip Code>

You make better care possible!

Dear <Provider Name>:

We are committed to offering support and resources to physicians to achieve the highest level of care possible for their patients. Thank you for your dedication to ensure that your patients receive exceptional care.

Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set® (HEDIS) was developed and is maintained by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to standardize and measure quality for all patients. One of these measures looks at using imaging studies for **uncomplicated lower back pain**. The intent is to evaluate the appropriate use of all diagnostic imaging studies, including X-rays, for uncomplicated new onset lower back pain.

How does this measure work?

- Includes patients 18 to 50 years of age.
- Principal diagnosis of low back pain, ICD-10: M47.26-M54.9 and M99 codes.
- Office visit outpatient evaluations, telemedicine/telehealth visits, emergency department visits and observation level of care.
- Physical therapy and/or osteopathic and/or chiropractic manipulative treatment.
- Patients with new onset low back pain diagnosis should not receive any imaging within the first 30 days of diagnosis, but rather receive conservative medical treatment with prescription strength analgesics and physical therapy.

As physicians, we know that even the simplest complaints of low back pain are never just “simple visits for low back pain.” Realizing that each patient is unique and imaging may be required, NCQA has added a vast number of medical conditions where imaging could be medically necessary. By simply providing that additional diagnosis in your medical evaluation, your patient with low back pain is excluded from your HEDIS metric, and therefore does not negatively affect your performance for NCQA.

Below we have provided a chart for your review and easy access, to utilize during your low back pain patient visits. We hope this provides one less step in your daily process to evaluate your patients.

DESCRIPTION	ICD-10 CODE
Cancer (active)	All ICD-10 "C" codes for active cancer apply
Cancer (personal history)	All ICD-10 "Z" codes for personal history of cancer apply
HIV	B20; Z21
IV Drug Abuse	All ICD-10 "F" codes for IV drug abuse apply
Kidney Transplant	0TY00Z0-0TY00Z2; 0TY10Z0-0TY10Z2
Major Organ Transplant, other than kidney	Heart, Small intestine, Large intestine, Liver, Pancreas islets, Ovaries, Face, Head, Thymus, Spleen, Lungs, Esophagus, Stomach
Neurologic Impairment	G83.4
Spinal Infection, Osteomyelitis, and Discitis	A17.81, G06.1, M46.25-M46.28, M46.35-M46.38, M46.46-M46.48
Trauma/Fractures	All ICD10 "S" codes for trauma/fractures apply

If you have any questions regarding the HEDIS measure for *Use of Imaging in Low Back Pain* and your Federal Employee Program® (FEP) patients, please do not hesitate to contact me at maria.flaquer@floridablue.com.

Best regards,



Maria A. Flaquer, M.D.
 Medical Director
 FEP, Care Management
 Florida Blue

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