



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Florida**

An Independent Licensee of the
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Diagnostic Imaging Quality Assessment Program for Physicians and Independent Diagnostic Testing Centers (IDTCs)

What is the purpose of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) Diagnostic Imaging Quality Assessment Program?

The purpose of the program is to collect, analyze, and provide information about advanced imaging service providers. An online survey tool is used to collect information. The objectives are to:

- Establish a shared understanding of current quality standards for advanced imaging service providers based on objective, quantifiable measures.
- Collaborate with advanced imaging service providers to identify areas for quality improvement and offer those providers the opportunity to address those areas.
- Implement industry standards, which demonstrate providers' commitment to quality of care and patient safety.

Who needs to participate in the Diagnostic Imaging Provider Assessment Program?

All contracted physicians and IDTCs that bill a global or technical component for advanced imaging services (such as CT scans, MR, Nuclear Cardiology, or PET scans) must participate in the program.

If we received accreditation from the American College of Radiology (ACR) or the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC), why do we need to participate in the Diagnostic Imaging Quality Assessment Program?

The information requested during the assessment process includes data used to establish compliance with industry-recognized accreditation standards such as those established by the ACR or the IAC. Accreditation from these entities will facilitate completion of the assessment. However, the assessment survey also gathers quality and service indicator information that is not required by ACR or IAC.

Is participation in the Diagnostic Imaging Quality Assessment Program required?

Yes. You are required to cooperate with the Diagnostic Imaging Quality Assessment, a component of BCBSF's Quality Improvement Program. Non-compliance may place your BCBSF contract at risk.

Will compliance with the assessment process become a condition for payment for advanced imaging services?

Industry standards are mandating a demonstration of quality for payment. In the future, BCBSF may change its Quality Management processes to include compliance as a condition for payment.

How is compliance determined?

Compliance results from meeting the established minimum score for each advanced imaging modality provided at your site. Currently, each score must be 70 or above to meet standards. If you have already completed the assessment, please check your online scorecard to see if you meet this standard. In the event that you have not attained this score, for each service you offer, confirm the information you have provided is accurate and take appropriate actions to improve your score. Effective January 2010, standards will be raised, and each score must be 80 or above.

Why are standards being raised?

BCBSF is committed to elevating and promoting patient safety in outpatient settings. It is important that our members receive services at sites where equipment, physicians and technologists meet national industry standards. We will work with our providers to maximize their success with this quality program.

If my office has already completed the assessment is further action required?

If you have successfully completed the assessment, no further action needs to be taken. You should go online to confirm that your scores meet the established standard for each modality you provide.

How would this requirement affect physicians that choose not to complete the assessment and forego providing advanced imaging services?

Physicians may continue to provide professional services to members and refer their patients needing advanced imaging services to an IDTC that has met the assessment standards. Please notify your physician contract manager if you will no longer provide these services. Your BCBSF participation status for professional services will not be affected.

How often will providers be asked to participate in the assessment process?

Advanced imaging service providers must update their assessment annually. However, when there are changes in a provider's status (e.g. new equipment, new technologist, etc.), the provider should update the information at that time using the online survey tool.

How is the information collected from the assessment survey being used?

Information from completed surveys is available in BCBSF's Online Provider Directory to show each of the advanced imaging service modalities that are available at IDTCs. Additionally, there is an indicator by the IDTC's name to show successful completion of this quality initiative. This information is also used during the pre-authorization process to educate referring physicians regarding the selection of IDTCs.

Who will conduct the assessment?

American Imaging Management, Inc. (AIM), an independent vendor, conducts the assessment using OptiNet, their online assessment tool. OptiNet allows providers to edit and update their information as needed.

What is the assessment process?

The survey collects data on staffing credentials and certifications for both technologists and physicians interpreting images, equipment specifications, quality assurance programs and policies, and accreditation status.

The information submitted by advanced imaging service providers is compiled and analyzed through OptiNet. OptiNet uses an innovative scoring engine based on industry standards and best practices to generate an objective, easy-to-understand quality score. Once the registration status is "Complete", the provider's scorecard is available the next day via the scorecard link in OptiNet.

How can providers access the assessment survey?

Providers may access the assessment survey on three websites: AIM's at <http://www.providerportal.com>; BCBSF's at www.bcbsfl.com (Physicians & Providers, Online Services, and then, click More); or through the Availity's at www.availity.com (Payer Resources, BCBSF, Tools).

When registering, enter your BCBSF provider number. Once you have accessed the AIM website, you will find the survey under the Profile Manager tab by clicking "Register My Sites." The online assessment tool provides a checklist of all information required to complete the survey and allows you to save and update your responses during the data entry process.

When does the survey need to be completed?

Surveys need to be completed by August 1, 2009.

A mobile imaging provider comes to our office two days a week. They provide both the machine and technologists. Who should fill out the assessment survey?

If you bill us for advanced imaging services, then it is your responsibility to ensure the assessment survey is completed. You will need to coordinate with the mobile imaging provider to obtain appropriate information on sections pertaining to the equipment and technologist(s).

If our practice doesn't own imaging equipment, but has a shared arrangement at a freestanding diagnostic center for the provision of diagnostic imaging services, who should complete the survey?

If you bill us for advanced imaging services, then it is your responsibility to ensure the assessment survey is completed. You may need to coordinate with others. In the survey, you should identify all shared service arrangements, including arrangements with other physicians.

What if we cannot complete an online survey?

If you do not have access to a computer to complete the survey online, a paper assessment survey is available. Please call AIM's Customer Service department at **(800) 252-2021**. AIM will send a survey to you within one working day of your request.

What if our site's demographic information in OptiNet is incorrect?

Information can be corrected by faxing the *Provider Information Update Form* available on BCBSF's website, www.bcbsfl.com. Click on Physicians & Providers, select Tools & Resources, then Forms. Print and complete the form and fax to **(904) 301-1884**.

For questions about the status of your updates or general questions, contact the Network Management Service Unit at **(800) 727-2227**, say "More Choices," and then "Network Management."

How do I navigate within the OptiNet online survey tool?

The tabs and road map along the top of the page allow the user to display the desired page. You can also move through the pages in order by clicking the "Next", "Save" and "Continue" buttons. You can skip to a desired page once a section has been saved, by clicking the appropriate road map links and tabs.

Can I use the Internet Explorer "back" button to go to a previous survey page?

We do not recommend using the "back" button because you may lose your connection to OptiNet. We recommend you select the back buttons that appear at the bottom left corner of the pages when available. The "Cancel" button will also back a user out of a page and display the previous one.

Can I interrupt an OptiNet session and save what I have entered?

OptiNet allows you to save information for future sessions. When users save information, the information displayed is from the last point of entry.

Where can I find an online help tool in OptiNet?

- A "Help" panel is included on the right side of the page.
- Additional help is available by clicking the Customer Service link at the bottom of any page in OptiNet. This link will initiate an email to AIM Customer Support.
- You may also contact AIM's Customer Service for assistance by calling **(800) 252-2021**.

How will I know if I submitted everything necessary for my survey to be considered complete?

Once the assessment survey has been submitted through the online OptiNet tool, status of the submission will be emailed to the person who submitted the survey. A registration number will be included. If the user submitted all required information, the email will confirm completion. If further information is required for assessment accuracy, the email will say additional information is needed and that AIM will contact the user to obtain follow-up information.

What if a new physician or technologist joins our staff after the assessment is completed?

If a new physician or technologist joins a site after the assessment is completed, you may log onto the OptiNet application at anytime to add the new physicians and/or technologists to the site list.

What if our site purchases new equipment?

The provider must add all new imaging equipment to the "equipment" section of the OptiNet survey tool. Log into OptiNet and add required information under the "equipment" section of its existing record.