What Services are Included in the RQI Program?

- Computed tomography (CT) scans (excluding CCTA)
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)/Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA)
- Nuclear cardiology
- Positron emission tomography (PET) scans

Imaging services and imaging services provided in conjunction with emergency room visits, inpatient hospitalization, outpatient surgeries (hospital or freestanding surgery centers), or 23-hour observation are excluded from this program.

As always, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is proud to provide you with health care coverage. We strive to provide you with the best services possible while educating you about ways to stay healthy.

1 Data based on AIM health plan client utilization data.
Medical imaging has been an essential key to health care since the late 1800s, when x-rays were first discovered. Since then, technology has come a long way, from providing a way to view bone fractures to studying cells, soft tissues and organs and even providing three-dimensional images from inside the human body.

Diagnostic imaging procedures, such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Computed Tomography (CT) scans, are a great example of this advanced technology. These procedures are, quite simply, amazing when used appropriately. Frequently referred to as advanced imaging, these procedures provide physicians with important information, saving thousands of lives on a daily basis.

Advanced imaging is one of the fastest growing clinical services in health care, increasing at an annual rate of 10% to 20% a year nationally. Unfortunately, individuals who receive multiple imaging procedures can receive high doses of radiation. Between 1980 and 2006, the effective radiation dose that the U.S. population received from diagnostic procedures increased by 650%.

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A 2009 study in the Archives of Internal Medicine estimated that approximately 29,000 future cancers could be related to CT scans performed in the US in 2007.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Why is Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska implementing this program?**

To help reduce unnecessary radiology services that are both costly and potentially harmful to our members.

**Will this program cause my claims to be denied?**

No. We will not deny claims for failure to obtain an ordering number. However, you should be aware that it is within the discretion of the servicing provider (the one who is performing the tests) to decline to perform the imaging procedure without an ordering number from the referring physician (the one who is ordering the tests). You should discuss this program and its requirements with your referring physician to make sure an ordering number is obtained. The order number process is quick (usually about five minutes), and as long as your physician is following national guidelines, an approval will be granted.

**Are physicians comfortable with having to use this process?**

Before implementing this program, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska sought advice and feedback from physicians across Nebraska. Those physicians agreed that this program is an important step for the health and safety of their patients. The RQI program is very much an effort of collaboration and cooperation between Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Nebraska physicians.

**When my doctor gets the order number, does that mean the imaging procedure will be covered under my insurance?**

No, this program is not tied to your benefits in any way. Claims will be processed according to the terms of your coverage in effect at the time the services were rendered.

**What if I need a scan as part of an emergency?**

Emergency room visits do not require an order number.