



IMAGING IN **FOCUS**

FOCUS is a quality improvement and innovation community for physicians to self-assess and gain quantitative feedback on their level of appropriate use, as well as share ideas on appropriate use criteria (AUC) implementation. FOCUS allows members to share strategies and help design systems to optimize utilization of cardiovascular imaging.

Through participation in the community, you will gain access to a shared list of tools and best practices that you can integrate into your practice. In addition, community members will have access to a performance improvement module (PIM) that can document participation in FOCUS and help individual physicians identify their ordering pattern.

Frequently Asked Questions

#1 What is FOCUS?

FOCUS is an ACC quality improvement and innovation community for physicians to self-assess and gain quantitative feedback on their level of appropriate use, as well as share ideas on AUC implementation.

#2 What is the goal of FOCUS?

ACC is committed to reducing unnecessary/inappropriate imaging by 15 percent in 2010 and by 50 percent within three years in aggregate while identifying best practice rates. The goal for an absolute inappropriate rate will never be zero.

3 What is an appropriate imaging study?

The definition of an appropriate imaging study is one in which the expected incremental information, combined with clinical judgment, exceeds the expected negative consequences by a sufficiently wide margin that the procedure is generally considered acceptable care and a reasonable approach for the indication.

#4 Who can participate in FOCUS?

The FOCUS QI and Innovation Community is open to ACC members and physicians nationwide who order and interpret cardiovascular imaging.

#5 How does the FOCUS community improve CV care nationally?

FOCUS members will share their AUC implementation experiences. Solutions and challenges discovered will be disseminated to facilitate positive AUC implementation nationally.

#6 What is a Performance Improvement Module (PIM)?

PIMs are web-based tools that guide physicians through the collection of patient data to identify performance gaps and ultimately implement a quality improvement plan for their practice.

#7 How do I improve my Appropriateness rate through FOCUS?

The PIM will provide you a data collection tool to provide appropriate use feedback on individual orders and on ordering patterns. The PIM also provides a structured way to identify performance gaps and develop a quality improvement action plan. Through participation in the community, you will gain access to a shared list of tools and best practices that you can integrate into your action plan. In addition, you can share your ideas, successes and challenges through the FOCUS community.

#8 How do I contribute to the community?

By joining the FOCUS community you can work together with experts to understand practical ways to optimize the selection of patients for diagnostic services -providing the community with the means to understand ways to impact their current appropriate use practice patterns. The listserv and Webinars will provide you with additional opportunities to develop and share best practices, and understand the challenges and opportunities of implementing AUC in this changing payment environment.

#9 Do I need to use the PIM to participate in FOCUS?

The PIMs are optional. However, they are excellent tools for determining and tracking your appropriateness rate.

#10 What is the difference between a Radiology Benefit Manager (RBM) and ACC developed AUC?

RBMs are utilization management organizations that contract with or are owned by health insurance plans. RBMs preauthorize diagnostic imaging orders and act as an access screen. Orders are approved using proprietary RBM developed clinical algorithms. The ACC has developed transparent AUC to define what an appropriate imaging study is.

#11 What is the 2010 CMS AUC Demonstration Project?

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will conduct an AUC demonstration project in 2010. CMS is evaluating the impact of AUC compared to Radiology Benefit Managers. The ACC hopes to facilitate practice participation in this demo for those sites that are interested. The CMS demo will enable members to help guide future payment and quality policy. Physician practices will be financially incentivized to participate in the demo.

#12 How will me or my practice benefit from participating in FOCUS or the CMS Demonstration Project?

As a physician or physician practice you will benefit from FOCUS and the CMS Demo by demonstrating a dedication to professionalism, quality, and resource stewardship.