

THE HCI SPOTLIGHT



Robert J. Stille
President
Heart Care Imaging, INC.

Dear Colleague -

Molecular imaging is not tomorrow's technology. It is what we are doing today, every day. The expanded engagement between molecular imaging and organizations such as the RUC, MedPAC, & the AMA has paved the way for us to voice our recommendations to the CMS with regards to relative reimbursement values. Specifically, the RUC is an expert panel of the AMA and specialty societies charged with developing relative value recommendations to Medicare. A key part of the RUC process is the completion of relative value surveys.....by YOU. Data from these surveys are used to establish the physician work that determines Medicare reimbursement. Ultimately, completing this survey will give physicians a voice in shaping Medicare relative values.

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) has issued its June report to Congress and in the report, urges Medicare to implement a prior authorization program for clinicians who order more advanced imaging studies than their peers. Citing the rapid volume growth of advanced imaging services over the past decade (including MRI, CT and nuclear medicine), the recommendation is designed to give the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) a tool to improve payment accuracy for and ensure the appropriate use of advanced imaging services. Other organizations such as ASNC and AMIC dispute the report and cite its use of old and flawed data. Recent reports have shown that imaging use is flat or decreasing (depending on the modality) since AUC guidelines were introduced. A bi-partisan letter from members of Congress has been sent to CMS voicing concern regarding their data and findings.

Test your knowledge. In closing we have an Appropriate Use Criteria (AUC) quiz question. Is radionuclide imaging APPROPRIATE in this case? Answer to follow next month.

- 64 year old man
- Shortness of breath on exertion
- Severe pulmonary fibrosis
- FEV1: 1 L/sec
- Nondiagnostic echocardiography
- Underwent triple CABG 20 years ago

Best regards,

U.S. market for PET tracers could reach \$4B by 2018

New clinical indications and positive reimbursement for cardiac studies could cause PET radiopharmaceutical sales to grow more than tenfold in the U.S. in coming years, to more than \$4 billion by 2018, according to a new report from market research firm Bio-Tech Systems.

<http://www.auntminnie.com/index.aspx?sec=sup&sub=mol&pag=dis&ItemID=95601&wf=1>

FDA gives first nod to PET/MRI system with Siemens clearance

The U.S. FDA announced the first regulatory clearance of a hybrid PET/MRI scanner in the U.S., with Siemens receiving 510(k) clearance for its Biograph mMR scanner

<http://www.auntminnie.com/index.aspx?sec=sup&sub=mri&pag=dis&ItemID=95536&wf=1>

Meta-analysis of diverse studies shows CT is a strong predictor of CV events

Findings of disease on coronary computed-tomography angiography (CCTA) scans are a relatively powerful independent predictor of coronary events. These data may be particularly relevant to homogenize reporting standards for cardiac CT, to determine appropriate design of prospective randomized trials for risk modification on the basis of cardiac CT findings, and to estimate the potential impact of noninvasive CT imaging on healthcare systems.

<http://www.theheart.org/article/1235503.do>

Americans still avoiding doctors, insurers say

Americans' use of medical services has not yet rebounded during the weak economy, health insurers say, in a trend that keeps the companies' costs down and could bolster their profits further this year.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/sns-rt-us-healthinsurerstre7515xp-20110602,0,1756889.story>

Sedentary behavior associated with higher mortality

People with higher levels of sedentary behavior, such as prolonged watching television, have higher mortality rates than more active individuals — even when they participate in the recommended minimal levels of moderate physical activity, according to a study cosponsored by the National Cancer Institute and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/744006?src=emailthis>

Consuming more olive oil may protect against strokes

Pour some more of that EVOO on your plate -- a study finds that eating more olive oil could be linked with lower stroke risk in older people.

<http://www.latimes.com/health/boostershots/la-heb-olive-oil-stroke-20110615,0,3132060.story>

Heart risks lower in men who get enough vitamin D

Men who consume the recommended amount of vitamin D are somewhat less likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke than those who get little of the vitamin in their diets, a large U.S. study suggests. At least 600 IU per day = 16% less likely to develop heart problems or stroke

<http://www.healthkey.com/health/sns-rt-us-heart-riskstre75n5mq-20110624,0,5176203.story>

To remove your name from our mailing list or if you have questions or comments email us at info@heartcareimaging.com or call 561-746-6125