

For Immediate Release



Medicare/Medicaid Increases PET Imaging Coverage for Cancer Patients

National Oncologic PET Registry Provided Overwhelming Evidence of PET's Value

Medford, Oregon—On April 3, 2009, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) officially expanded coverage of positron emission tomography (PET) scans for use in the diagnosis of patients with cancer. This decision was based, in large part, on compelling clinical evidence of the effectiveness of PET imaging for cancer management and treatment provided by the three year comprehensive study known as the National Oncologic PET Registry (NOPR).

Medicare's decision to cover PET scans for cancer demonstrates the medical value of PET and the important role PET holds in diagnosing, staging and monitoring treatment for many cancers.

With Medicare's expanded PET coverage, eleven types of cancer are now covered for both the initial diagnosis and subsequent treatment evaluation for patients. For all other cancers, Medicare coverage can be obtained via participation in the ongoing NOPR program which has been extended an additional two years to continue studying even more types cancers.

“For years, physicians and researchers around the world have known that PET is an invaluable diagnostic tool for patients with a wide range of cancers,” said Steve Cool, Technical Director at Oregon Advanced Imaging (OAI), in Medford. “The evidence contained in the NOPR study proves the effectiveness of PET as an essential part of a cancer patient's treatment planning.”

NOPR was established in 2006 to track the value of PET imaging as a diagnostic and staging tool in patients with cancer. The vast national study analyzed data from more than 41,000 patients at 1,885 imaging centers throughout the US. The results showed that the use of PET scanning led to an intended change in cancer management in more than one out of three cases.

NOPR is sponsored by the Academy of Molecular Imaging (AMI) and managed by the American College of Radiology (ACR) and ACR Imaging Network (ACRIN). Oregon Advanced Imaging was one of the first imaging centers in the US to register and participate in the national study. Staff at OAI assist all referring medical offices with the NOPR registration process to facilitate coverage for their patients.

Oregon Advanced Imaging is a community partnership of Rogue Valley Medical Center, Providence Medford Medical Center, and Medford Radiological Group and provides the only PET/CT imaging technology accredited by the American College of Radiology in the southern Oregon. For information on PET/CT technology visit www.oaimaging.com.

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