25 years of IAC-VL and Still No Reimbursement: Should I Continue to Spend Money to Re-Accredit?

Mark H. Meissner, MD
University of Washington School of Medicine
Seattle, WA

Disclosure:
Mark H. Meissner, MD
Board of Directors IAC Vein Centers

The Beginning of the IAC (ICAVL)
April 10, 1989

ICAVL Accredited Labs

Why Accreditation IS NOT Required
MIPPA – H.R. 6331, Sec 135; Imaging Provisions

• Advanced Diagnostic Imaging (ADI) accreditation for
  • Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
  • Computed Tomography (CT)

• Ultrasound excluded by lobbying efforts of ACOG
  Specifically allows HHS secretary to specify other imaging services in consultation with physician specialty organizations
But What About Private Carriers?

- Anthem BCBS (Virginia)
- BCBS of Louisiana (Compliance with standards)
- BCBS of Massachusetts
- Horizon BCBS of New Jersey
- Highmark (DE, PA, WV)
- CareCore National / eviCore (National)
- NIA Magellan (National)
- Tufts Health Plan (Non-radiologists)

Is There Are Value in Accreditation?

Brown OW, J Vasc Surg 2004

- 178 asymptomatic patients referred for carotid endarterectomy
- All with carotid duplex US at non-accredited facility
- Duplex US repeated in ICAVL accredited laboratory
- Discordant findings in 177 / 348 (51%) arteries
- Minor discordance in 54 / 348 (16%) arteries
- Significant discordance in 123 / 348 (35%) arteries
- Management altered in 107 (60%) patients
- Stenosis overestimated (no surgery needed) in 88 (49%) pts
- Contralateral underestimated (need surgery) in 11 (10%) pts
- Additional cost of $32,190 to repeat scans in accredited lab

Is There Are Value in Accreditation?

Manning WJ, Clin Cardiol 2015

- Web-based survey of IAC accredited imaging facilities
  - Vascular testing, echo, CT, MRI, Nuclear / PET
  - 1858 / 25,598 (7%) response rate
- 92% felt accreditation very important /important

Vascular Surgery & Accreditation

IAC VT Medical Director Specialty

Conclusions

- Ultrasound currently excluded from ADI accreditation by CMS
- Lobbying efforts of other societies (ACOG)

BUT, …

- Accreditation DOES have value
  - Improved quality of care
  - Accuracy
  - Imaging quality
  - Reduced healthcare costs
- Accreditation is required by many private carriers
- CMS pathway for requiring U/S accreditation is specified
- Our societies must lobby for U/S accreditation