

**10.14.2025**

**Fidelis Zoom meeting at 1pm**

**Dr. Vincent Marchello**, Fidelis Medical Director, Internist

**Dr. Karl Haake**, Centene Medical Director, Board Certified in Anesthesia and Pain Medicine

**Dr. Robert Tiso**, President New York Spine and Wellness Center, Board Certified in Anesthesia and Pain Medicine, President NYSIPP

Dr Marcello mentioned early July to early Oct. this is the data : out of 407 requests: 78 initially approved, 89 denied, 29 still in process being reviewed. Of the 89 denials, 60 appealed, 22 approved, 38 remain denied. He said a 22% initial denial rate and 90% approval rate after appeals. He mentioned the need to reduce the number of appeals and improve the initial approval rate. He stated he would continue to watch the numbers.

1. Fidelis patients represent 7% of our patient population. July 2025 – Oct 1, 2025: 201 denials – 68 are Fidelis (33%), 19 are 12 month rule, 3 approved on internal appeal. The rest of the 12-month rule are with NYS or in process —5 we have gotten over turned so far. Dr Marcello voiced he will work on minimizing cases that need to go to external appeal, he acknowledged that more work is needed to improve internal appeal processes to avoid external appeals.
2. The last meeting you were going to re-educate medical directors about the 12-month rule and see about getting the that verbiage changed in the policy? Dr Marcello confirmed that medical directors were educated about the 12-month rule in July or August, and he will educate them again.
3. 1 **authorization** denial for sedation in September – it was over turned on appeal but we should never see these authorization denial based on this since we do not ask for authorizations since we do not bill. Dr Marcello to re-educate his team on this.
4. What was the outcome of why there are 2 reviewers and 1 is not pain specialist. Rebecca to keep an eye out for examples of non-pain specialist reviewers handling appeals.
5. MRI findings, when findings are unrelated to the procedure. We are still getting these reasons:
  - *records do not show imaging studies that do not suggest any other obvious cause of the pain*
  - *your records do not show that you have continued pain from a slipped disc at a specific spine level or narrowing of the spinal canal confirmed by physical exam*
  - *your records do not show that your pain is from specific causes (narrowing of the spinal canal, a slipped disc, or spine bone changes) confirmed by physical exam.*
  - *imaging studies cannot show findings that suggest other causes of pain*Dr. Marcello to personally educate all medical directors and the appeals pain specialist about not denying procedures based on MRI interpretations that overrule the treating physician's determination.
6. He will look into extending the authorization period potentially to 60 days from the date of New York State notification of an overturned denial. Dr Marcello will look into this further. If we did not have to go to the state then this would not be an issue.
7. We will set up a meeting 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026 and include the NYSIPP officers and send the agenda a week ahead of time