



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

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August 08, 2022

Russell H. Amundson, MD  
Senior Medical Director, Value Creation Team  
United Healthcare  
\*\*sent electronically\*\*

Re: Coverage of iFuse Implant System

Dear Dr. Amundson,

We would like to follow-up on your correspondence dated July 12, 2022 in response to our inquiry regarding United Healthcare's coverage criteria for sacroiliac joint fusions devices. AAOS appreciates your follow-up. While we understand that UHC continues to review published clinical evidence about minimally invasive sacroiliac joint fusion devices and *may* reassess their position, we would like to bring an update to your attention. Since our May 17, 2022 correspondence, we have learned that AIM Specialty Health has removed the requirement of exclusively allowing the iFuse device as part of their Appropriate Use Criteria for sacroiliac joint fusion effective June 12, 2022.

As a reminder, AAOS continues to be concerned with United Healthcare's policy which restricts the use of other sacroiliac joint fusion devices. This practice of granting exclusive coverage has severely affected the surgeon's ability to provide the best treatment for their patients. As stated previously, we are also extremely concerned with what appears to be a device company dictating coverage of procedures. The practice of an insurance company (versus a surgeon) choosing what surgical devices a surgeon must use sets a dangerous precedent. The AAOS believes that the determination of how to best provide adequate care, including selection of the most appropriate device, should fall under the purview of the patient-surgeon relationship, as these are the individuals who shoulder the risk of these procedures.

Representatives are available to speak with you and your team at your convenience to discuss this issue further. Please contact Joanne Willer at [willer@aaos.org](mailto:willer@aaos.org) to coordinate a follow-up meeting.

Sincerely,

Felix H. Savoie III, MD, FAAOS  
President, AAOS

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