Brachytherapy: Coding and Documentation

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Contact Information

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Disclaimer

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Objectives of this Presentation

Discuss the Process of Care for Brachytherapy
Educate Attendees on Recent Coding Changes
Provide Guidance on Appropriate Documentation
Emphasize Utilization of Current Reference Materials
Outline Common Brachytherapy Processes
# Brachytherapy Reminders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For All Brachytherapy Procedures</th>
<th>Practice patterns differ from physician to physician</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process of care differs for each treatment site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Billing templates are NOT recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bill only for work performed &amp; documented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codes vary from HDR &amp; LDR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A <strong>Procedure Note</strong> or an <strong>Operative Note</strong> is necessary for all brachytherapy procedures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brachytherapy Process of Care

1. Clinical Treatment Planning
2. Applicator Placement
3. Simulation & Imaging
4. Dosimetry
5. Treatment Delivery
Clinical Treatment Planning

Utilization Guidelines:

- Billable one time per course
- May be billable more than once if performed by a separate physician at a different location

Treatment planning (CPT code 77263)
Brachytherapy (other than coronary, which is discussed in another policy) is routinely designated complex (77263) because it requires complex treatment volume design, dose levels near normal tissue tolerance, analysis or special tests, complex fractionation, or delivery concurrent with other therapeutic modalities or treatment of previously irradiated tissues. If brachytherapy is used as an adjunct to external beam therapy, a single complex treatment planning code is used to encompass both modalities, unless provided by a different provider in a different place of service.
Special Treatment Procedure

Professional and Technical

77470 Special treatment procedure (e.g., total body irradiation, hemibody radiation, per oral, or endocavitary irradiation)

Utilization Guidelines:

• Reported for extra work required by the physician & staff for special procedures
• Allowed once per course of therapy
• Requires documentation to support the additional time and/or effort
Standard of Care

- As techniques or modalities become standard of care, they are no longer considered “special” by our payers.

Use of "Special Treatment Procedure" in IMRT (CPT 77470)

A claim for "Special treatment procedure (eg, total body irradiation, hemibody radiation, per oral, endocavitary or intraoperative cone irradiation)" would not be appropriate for services that are a necessary part of IMRT planning (77301). However, this service might rarely be appropriate during a course of IMRT when the respective treatment is being delivered as a separate therapy. Providers are cautioned that the use of this code implies an actual special treatment procedure with moderate physician work and very considerable facility expense (such as in TBI). Less significant "special procedures" could be billed with CPT 77499 (if any other code) or such procedures might represent a regular variant of IMRT or regular combination with IMRT.
Applicator Placement

Brachytherapy may be performed concomitantly with surgical resection or in conjunction with procedures such as endoscopy or angioplasty, which are required to achieve access to the site of the disease. There are two distinct phases required to complete the process known as brachytherapy:

1. The insertion or placement of non-radioactive applicators or conduits that receive or transmit the radioactive material into the body, and
2. The loading of the radioactive material (the active or therapeutic agent) into the conduits or directly into tissue.

May be performed by the radiation oncologist or in collaboration with another physician
## Placement Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19296</td>
<td>Placement of radiotherapy after loading balloon catheter into the breast for interstitial radioelement application following partial mastectomy, includes image guidance; on date separate from partial mastectomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19297</td>
<td>concurrent with partial mastectomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19298</td>
<td>Placement of radiotherapy after loading brachytherapy catheters (multiple tube &amp; button type) into the breast for interstitial radioelement application following (at the time of or subsequent to) partial mastectomy, includes image guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20555</td>
<td>Placement of needles or catheters into muscle &amp;/or soft tissue for subsequent interstitial radioelement application (at the time of or subsequent to the procedure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31643</td>
<td>Bronchoscopy with placement of catheter(s) for intracavitary radioelement application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41019</td>
<td>Placement of needles, catheters, or other device(s) into the head and/or neck region (percutaneous, transoral, or transnasal) for subsequent interstitial radioelement application</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Placement Codes Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43241</td>
<td>Endoscopy with transendoscopic intraluminal tube or catheter placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55875</td>
<td>Transperineal placement of needles or catheters into prostate for interstitial radioelement application, with or without cystoscopy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55920</td>
<td>Placement of needles or catheters into pelvic organs &amp;/or genitalia (except prostate) for subsequent interstitial radioelement application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57155</td>
<td>Insertion of uterine tandem and/or ovoids for clinical brachytherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57156</td>
<td>Insertion of a vaginal radiation afterloading apparatus for clinical brachytherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58346</td>
<td>Insertion of Heyman capsules for clinical brachytherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C9725</td>
<td>Placement of endorectal Intracavitary application for high intensity brachytherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0190T</td>
<td>Placement of intraocular source</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Treatment Devices

- Billable once per course
- Typically billed as simple (CPT® 77332); however, there are instances where complex would be appropriate
- Vaginal cylinder and Tandem & Ovoid (Ring) included in placement code PE for MPFS
- Prostate template included in PE for LDR treatment delivery
Moderate Sedation

- Conscious sedation is now referred to as moderate sedation (MS)
  - Patient still responds purposefully to verbal commands
  - Not used for admin of pain meds for pain control, minimal sedation, deep sedation or monitored anesthesia care
- Uses would include brachytherapy T&O applicator insertion
- Accounts for intraservice work which includes the following:
  - Begins at admin of sedation & ends when procedure is completed
  - Includes ordering and/or administering initial and subsequent doses
  - Requires continuous face-to-face attendance of physician
  - Requires monitoring patient response to sedation
Moderate Sedation for T&O

- When Rad Onc places T&O applicator and administers moderate sedation, an independent trained observer (individual qualified to monitor the patient during the procedure who has no other duties during the procedure) must monitor the patient & the codes are as follows:
  - Placement & moderate sedation by same physician
    - 57155 placement of T&O applicator
    - 99152 for patients 5 yrs. or older, initial 15 mins of intraservice
    - 99153 each additional 15 mins of intraservice time
Rad Onc & Other Physician

• When Rad Onc places T&O applicator and a different physician or qualified health care professional administers the moderate sedation
  • Placement of T&O applicator by Rad Onc
    – 57155 placement of T&O applicator
  • Moderate sedation by different physician
    – 99156 for patients 5 yrs. or older, initial 15 mins of intraservice
    – 99157 each additional 15 mins of intraservice time
Brachytherapy Simulations

• Typically performed for:
  – Acquisition of imaging and planning information
  – Verification of source placement
  – Confirmation of applicator placement prior to treatment

Coding guidelines vary depending on the procedure performed
“The process of measuring the anatomy and placing marks on the skin or immobilization device to help the team direct the radiation safely and exactly to the intended location is called "simulation." For example, in code 77290, brachytherapy simulation is the complex process of making position adjustments and for performing dose calculations (code 77290). Nonradioactive "dummy" sources are used to geographically define the "eventual position" of the radioactive sources in temporary implant devices. Code 77280 is used to report the simple simulation for subsequent "check" verification simulations during the course of radiotherapy with temporary implants to confirm or correct applicator position.”
9. Partial breast high dose rate brachytherapy may be performed two times a day. The first therapeutic radiology simulation for the course of therapy may be complex and reported as CPT code 77290. However, subsequent simulations during the course of therapy should be reported as CPT code 77280.
# Brachytherapy Isodose Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional and Technical</th>
<th>77316</th>
<th>Brachytherapy isodose plan; simple (calculation(s) made from 1 to 4 sources, or remote afterloading brachytherapy, 1 channel), <strong>includes basic dosimetry calculation(s)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77317</td>
<td>Intermediate (calculation(s) made from 5 to 10 sources, or remote afterloading brachytherapy, 2-12 channels), <strong>includes basic dosimetry calculation(s)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77318</td>
<td>Complex (calculation(s) made from over 10 sources, or remote afterloading brachytherapy, over 12 channels), <strong>includes basic dosimetry calculation(s)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3D Plan CPT® 77295

- 3D planning may be applicable based on the plan performed
  - Standard requirements apply
  - Billed instead of the brachytherapy isodose plan

Simulation (77280-77295)
For brachytherapy, simulation may require the use of imaging examinations of the implanted sources or applicator(s) containing dummy (i.e., non-radioactive) sources. These films of the implanted sources are used to develop isodose curves and other dosimetry, and may be billed separately, when appropriate. CPT code 77295 may be billed as part of the brachytherapy process when the needed parameters are included (i.e. 3D volume reconstruction with dose volume histogram for target and normal tissues, etc). Code 77295 precludes the use of codes 77316-77318 for the same treatment volume.
Treatment Delivery (LDR)

Intracavitary
- 77761 Intracavitary simple; 1-4 sources
- 77762 Intracavitary intermediate; 5-10 sources
- 77763 Intracavitary complex; >10 sources

Interstitial
- 7778 Interstitial complex; >10 sources

Professional and Technical
Code Revision

- **77778** Interstitial radiation source application, complex, includes supervision, handling, loading of radiation source, when performed
  
  - Includes the work of CPT® code 77790; therefore, not separately reportable
  
  - Use CPT® code 77799 (Unlisted procedure, clinical brachytherapy) to report interstitial LDR procedures that do not meet the level requirement for 77778, previously reported with codes 77776 and 77777
## Treatment Delivery (HDR)

### Professional and Technical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCPCS Code</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77767</td>
<td>Remote afterloading high dose rate radionuclide skin surface brachytherapy, includes basic dosimetry, when performed; lesion diameter up to 2.0 cm or 1 channel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77768</td>
<td>Remote afterloading high dose rate radionuclide skin surface brachytherapy, includes basic dosimetry, when performed; lesion diameter over 2.0 cm and 2 or more channels, or multiple lesions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77770</td>
<td>Remote afterloading high dose rate radionuclide interstitial or intracavitary brachytherapy, includes basic dosimetry, when performed; 1 channel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77771</td>
<td>Remote afterloading high dose rate radionuclide interstitial or intracavitary brachytherapy, includes basic dosimetry, when performed; 2-12 channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77772</td>
<td>Remote afterloading high dose rate radionuclide interstitial or intracavitary brachytherapy, includes basic dosimetry, when performed; over 12 channels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Electronic Brachytherapy

Technical Only

- **0394T** High dose rate electronic brachytherapy, skin surface application, per fraction, includes basic dosimetry, when performed

- **0395T** High dose rate electronic brachytherapy, interstitial or intracavitary treatment, per fraction, includes basic dosimetry, when performed

When reporting codes 0394T or 0395T the following codes cannot also be reported: 77261-77263, 77300, 77306 – 77307, 77316 – 77318, 77332 – 77334, 77336, 77427, 77431, 77432, 77435, 77469, 77470, 77499, 77761 – 77763, 77770 – 77772, 77778 and 77789
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Brachytherapy Source (or Radiopharmaceutical)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1716</td>
<td>Gold 198, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1717</td>
<td>High dose rate iridium 192, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1719</td>
<td>Non-high dose rate iridium 192, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2616</td>
<td>Non-stranded, Yttrium-90, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2634</td>
<td>Non-stranded, high activity, Iodine 125, &gt;1.01 mCi, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2635</td>
<td>Non-stranded, high activity, palladium-103, &gt;2.2 mCi, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2636</td>
<td>Linear source, non-stranded, palladium-103, per 1mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2637</td>
<td>Non-stranded, ytterbium-169, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2638</td>
<td>Stranded, Iodine-125, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2639</td>
<td>Non-stranded, Iodine-125, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2640</td>
<td>Stranded, palladium-103, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2641</td>
<td>Non-stranded, palladium-103, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2642</td>
<td>Stranded, Cesium-131, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2643</td>
<td>Non-stranded, Cesium-131, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2644</td>
<td>Brachytherapy source, cesium-131 chloride solution, per millicurie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2698</td>
<td>Brachytherapy source, stranded, not otherwise specified, per source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2699</td>
<td>Brachytherapy src, non-stranded, not otherwise specified, per src</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Supplies & Miscellaneous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1715</td>
<td>Brachytherapy needle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1728</td>
<td>Catheter, brachytherapy seed administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3001</td>
<td>Radioelement for brachytherapy; any type, each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19499</td>
<td>Unlisted procedure, breast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53899</td>
<td>Unlisted procedure, urinary system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55899</td>
<td>Unlisted procedure, male genital system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58999</td>
<td>Unlisted procedure, female genital system (non-obstetrical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77799</td>
<td>Unlisted procedure, clinical brachytherapy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Continuing Medical Physics

Technical Only

77336 Continuing medical physics consultation, including assessment of treatment parameters, quality assurance of dose delivery, and review of patient treatment documentation in support of the radiation oncologist, reported per week of therapy

Utilization Guidelines:

• Billable once per five fractions
• Applicable for single fraction or two fraction courses
• During final treatment week three or more fractions are required
• Documentation required to support physics review and parameters checked
Special Physics Consult

Technical Only

77370 Special medical radiation physics consultation

Utilization Guidelines:

• Must be ordered by a physician for a specific reason
• Report by the physicist addressing the specific request
• Physician signature on the report is required
• Billed on the date of the report
Payer Instructions

CPT code 77370 must be used for consultative purposes when a problem or special situation arises during radiation therapy. This code requires a detailed written report describing the problem to be given to the requesting physician.

Examples of problems that might justify use of this code include:

- the complex interrelationships of electron and photon ports and complex dosimetric considerations in brachytherapy, including high dose rate remote afterloader applications, intravascular brachytherapy treatments, and interstitial radioactive seed implantation;

- analysis of customized beam modification devices and special blocking procedures (and their dosimetric evaluation) to protect critical organs during treatment;

- analysis of the effects of previous radiation therapy with assessment of cumulative radiation dose to critical organs.

77370 Special Medical Physics Consultation

The special medical radiation physics consultation code is used when the radiation oncologist makes a direct request to the qualified medical physicist for a special consultative report or for specific physics services on an individual patient. Such a request may be made when the complexity of the treatment plan is of such magnitude that a thorough written analysis is necessary to address a specific problem or when the service to be performed requires the expertise of a qualified medical physicist. The clinical indication that justified the request for the special physics consultation should also be documented.

Examples of problems that might justify the use of this code include:

- Complex interrelationships of electron and photon ports and complex dosimetric considerations in brachytherapy, including high dose rate remote afterloader applications, intravascular brachytherapy treatments, and interstitial radioactive seed implantation;

- Analysis of customized beam modification devices and special blocking procedures (and their dosimetric evaluation) to protect critical organs during treatment;

- Analysis of the effects of previous radiation therapy with assessment of cumulative radiation dose to critical organs;

- Computation of dose to the fetus in a pregnant patient undergoing radiation therapy or special brachytherapy equipment developed by the qualified medical physicist to treat a particular patient.

The qualified medical physicist will spend a considerable amount of time and effort on behalf of a specific patient and will render a customized written report (which will form part of the patient's chart) to the radiation oncologist in reference to the problem or service being addressed.

CPT code 77370 must be used for consultative purposes when a problem or special situation arises during radiation therapy. This code requires a detailed written report describing the problem to be given to the requesting physician.
Documentation Requirements

• Detailed procedure note for each fraction
  – Site
  – Applicator placement
  – Imaging and data acquired
  – Planning
  – Dose, treatment time, number of channels, needles or sources
  – Completion and discharge
Brachytherapy Diagrams

- Examples include:
  - HDR Cylinder
  - HDR Accelerated Partial Breast Irradiation (APBI)
  - LDR Prostate Seed Implant

- Intended to demonstrate coding differences and required documentation for common brachytherapy techniques

- Additional codes may apply based on practice patterns, setting, supporting documentation and medical necessity
Insertion of Applicator: MD Performs procedure and documents via procedure note

Simulation & CT: Imaging of applicator and placement for planning purposes. Documented within procedure note

Brachytherapy Isodose Plan: Utilizing CT scan, isodose plan is completed and documented.

Source Activity: Activity of HDR source is determined and documented

Treatment Delivery: Treatment delivery documented by a procedure note and information from HDR unit.

Insertion of Cylinder 57156 (P/TC)
Simple Treatment Device 77332 (TC)

Charge Capture:

Simple Simulation 77280 (P/TC)

Complex Simulation 77290 (P/TC)

Brachytherapy Isodose Plan 77316 (P/TC)

Treatment 77770 1 channel (P/TC)
HDR Iridium Source C1717 (TC)

The cylinder is included in placement code Practice Expense for the professional and is considered non-billable.

Treatment device is billable once per course. If a different applicator is necessary, this may be billed again with documentation.

If volume of interest and critical structure(s) are used for planning a 3D plan, 77295, may be billable instead of the 77316.

If 77295, NCCI edits will apply to the simulation and imaging.

Source is not billable in freestanding facility.

If a change is made that requires a new isodose plan, it is appropriate to bill a new plan with the supporting medical necessity. See planning charges above.

Source is not billable in freestanding facility.

Verification Simulation and CT

Source Activity: HDR Treatment 77770 1 channel (P/TC)
HDR Iridium Source C1717 (TC)
Patient Agrees to XRT

Physician Clinical Treatment Planning:
- detail the “Planned Course” of therapy
- provide specific orders for services
- medical necessity statements

Charge Capture:
Clinical Planning 77261, 77262 or 77263 (P)

Simulation and CT:
Imaging of applicator and placement for planning purposes. Documented within procedure note

Charge Capture:
Complex Simulation 77290 (P/TC)

Planning

Brachytherapy Isodose Plan:
Utilizing CT scan, isodose plan is completed and documented.

Charge Capture:
Brachytherapy Isodose Plan 77317 (P/TC)

Applicator Insertion

AM Fractions 1-10

Charge Capture:
Simple Simulation 77280 (P/TC)

Imaging and Verification Simulation:
Catheter is imaged and measurements and catheter parameters are verified and documented

Charge Capture:
Simple Simulation 77280 (P/TC)

PM

Charge Capture:
HDR Treatment Delivery 77771 (P/TC)
HDR Iridium 192 source C1717 (TC)

HDR Treatment Delivery and Source:
Treatment is delivered and documented by HDR unit documentation and procedure note by the MD

Charge Capture:
HDR Treatment Delivery 77771 (P/TC)
HDR Iridium 192 source C1717 (TC)

Source is not billable in freestanding facility.

Additional Codes

Continuing Physics:
Treatment, planning, dosing, etc. is checked and documented by physics

Charge Capture:
Continuing Physics 77336 (TC) fx 1-5
Continuing Physics 77336 (TC) fx 6-10

· If volume of interest and critical structure(s) are used for planning a 3D plan, 77295, may be billable instead of the 77317.
· If 77295, NCCI edits will apply to the simulation.
· If planning and treatment completed on same date, additional NCCI edits will apply.
Patient Agrees to XRT

Physician Clinical Treatment Planning:
- detail the “Planned Course” of therapy
- provide specific orders for services
- medical necessity statements

Volume Study and/or Pubic Arch:
MD Performs procedure and documents via procedure note

Pre Planning by Physics or Dosimetry

Brachytherapy Isodose Plan:
Utilizing prostate volume, brachytherapy isodose plan is completed and documented

Seed Assay:
The brachytherapy seeds are received and an assay is performed and documented.

Urologist:
Placement of Needles
Rad Onc:
Implant sources i.e. LDR tx delivery, US guidance, template, brachy verification simulation documented by a procedure note

Post Planning

Post Implant CT:
Perform CT and document procedure via Post Brachytherapy CT note

3D Simulation:
Physics or dosimetry completes 3D simulation outlining tumor volume and critical structures

LDR Prostate Seed Implant

Charge Capture:
Clinical Planning 77261, 77262 or 77263 (P)

Charge Capture:
U/S Volume Study 76873 (P/TC)
Pubic Arch 77014 (TC) if applicable

Charge Capture:
Brachytherapy Isodose Plan 77318 (P/TC)

Charge Capture:
Seed Assay 77300 x 1 or 77331 x 1 (P/TC)

Day of Implant Charges:
U/S Guidance 76965 (P/TC)
Placement of needles 55875 (TC) (Pro by Urologist)
Template 77332 (TC)
LDR Treatment 77778 (P/TC)
BrachytherapyVerification Simulation 77290 (P/TC)
Seeds C26XX x number ordered (stranded) (TC)
Seeds C26XX x number ordered (non-stranded) (TC)
Brachytherapy needles C1715 x number used (TC)

Charge Capture:
CT Guidance 77014 (TC)

Charge Capture:
3D Simulation 77295 (P/TC)
QUESTIONS