



Proton Therapy

Identifying Access Opportunities

FEBRUARY 2024



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proton Beam Therapy (PBT) is effective and may be preferable to photon therapy in complex cancer cases, but payers need to take a nuanced approach to coverage. Manufacturers seeking market access must address payer concerns as well as challenging coverage policies that could limit PBT access for socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Proton Beam Therapy Gains Market Traction Despite Financial Struggles



The global proton therapy market size is projected to reach \$1.6 billion by 2031, with a CAGR of 13.6% from 2022 to 2031, according to Allied Market Research.



North America holds more than two-fifths of the total market share for proton therapy, per AMR.

The National Association for Proton Therapy lists 37 member institutions operating today with two more under development

Driving PBT market growth: Several factors, including an increase in the prevalence of cancer, a surge in the number of awareness campaigns regarding benefits of proton therapy, and technological advancements in proton therapy devices.

However: Two PBT centers issued a notice of default due to insufficient liquidity in 2022, and several other centers are facing financing hurdles, according to Forbes.



Valuate Insight: These financial struggles signal a disconnect in expected revenue.

- PBT revenue projections often rely on developing coverage requirements, so it is likely that insufficient coverage and access are driving these financial struggles.

PBT Coverage Barriers to Consider

Proton therapy often is a preferred treatment course in highly complex cancers where normal tissue may be at risk for radiation exposure.

However, proton therapy remains a niche product with unmet potential. Moreover, evidence for proton therapy efficacy continues to develop and relative cost sensitivity remains.

Valuate Insight: Manufacturers must be prepared to navigate nuanced payer coverage decisions.

ACCESS SPOTLIGHT: DIFFERING COVERAGE POLICIES



Coverage Depends on “Medical Necessity”

“... the available evidence suggests that PBT may be essentially equivalent to protons. Where PBT is significantly more costly than IMRT, coverage for proton beam therapy... will depend on the applicable health plan definition of medical necessity...”



PBT is “Experimental”

“Aetna considers proton beam radiotherapy experimental and investigational for all other indications, including the following indications in adults (not an all-inclusive list) because its effectiveness for these indications has not been established.”

Several dozen cancers are not covered.



A Nuanced Approach

PBT “is considered not medically necessary in patients with local or locally advanced prostate cancer. However, given the comparable outcomes, [using PBT] to treat local or locally advanced prostate cancer may be considered medically necessary when the requested specific course of therapy will be no more costly than IMRT photon irradiation or other irradiation approaches.”

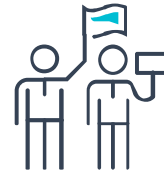


Valuate Insight: Payer coverage is an ongoing barrier to access and reimbursement for proton therapy. While PBT coverage for pediatric patients and certain rare cancers seems nearly universal, that is not the case with more common cancers.

How to Improve PBT Access: Address Health Disparities

Challenging coverage policies make it even more difficult for socially and economically disadvantaged groups to gain access to novel therapies such as PBT.

- **Pursuing coverage denials and appeals** takes time, resources, and healthcare literacy.
- Although the number of PBT facilities have increased, **disparities in access across racial groups have not improved**. For example, Black individuals often lack the same access to proton therapy as other racial groups, while access challenges seem to impact pediatric patients more than adult patients.
- **Socioeconomic barriers** such as out-of-pocket costs, access to transportation, and caregiver availability may limit the ability to access proton therapy centers even as they proliferate.



Valuate Insight: Agility and flexibility in the rapidly evolving PBT landscape are key components of any market access strategy.

The healthcare reimbursement system is complex, with countless unique benefit designs, structural underinsurance challenges for many patients, and risk-transfer arrangements which make it difficult to identify key decision makers. Moreover, proton therapy providers, operators and advocates are finding that gaining coverage is difficult; even when coverage is secure, access doesn't necessarily follow.

It is essential to employ a big-picture view of these access challenges along with the right evidence and analytics to enhance value propositions and ensure that all patients get access to the care they need.

How can we
help you
optimize access?



Thank You



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