Implantable Infusion Pumps for Non-Cancer Pain

Implantable infusion pumps are battery powered devices that are surgically implanted to provide continuous drug delivery for pain management in patients with non-cancer pain. The pump, which has a fluid reservoir, is placed under the skin in the abdomen. The catheter is inserted into the intrathecal or epidural space of the spine, tunneled under the skin, and connected to the pump. The drug is delivered to the spinal cord where pain signals travel, interrupting pain signals before they reach the brain. The ability to deliver the drug directly into the spine provides pain relief with significantly smaller opioid doses, which can help to minimize side effects (e.g., drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, nausea, vomiting and constipation) that can accompany systemic pain medications that might be delivered orally, transdermally, or through an IV.

The New York State Department of Health currently covers implantable infusion pumps for patients with a cancer diagnosis. The Department will make a determination whether or not to expand coverage of this technology within the Medicaid benefit package.

Dossier sources of evidence already submitted:

The following evidence was recently submitted to the Department:


34. Narouze, SN, SN Narouze, J Casanova and D Souzdalnitski. Patients with a history of spine surgery or spinal injury may have a higher chance of intrathecal catheter granuloma formation. Pain Practice,. 2014;14(1):57-63.


