

NCD 20.7: Pick Your Path to Compliance and Quality Care

In October 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released their final NCD 20.7, which pertains to coverage for percutaneous transluminal angioplasty (PTA) of the carotid artery concurrent with stenting.

While the [final CMS determination](#) was that participation in a registry is not mandated for coverage, CMS made it clear in the ruling that centers **must** establish and maintain institutional and physician standards to support a dedicated carotid stent program—and registry participation remains the most fitting route to do so. **Here's how you can rely on the The Society for Vascular Surgery® Vascular Quality Initiative® (SVS VQI) to satisfy CMS requirements and maintain your commitment to quality care for your vascular patients...**

PATH A VQI TSP PARTICIPATION (THE DIRECT ROUTE)

The decision states that facilities enrolled in a CMS-approved national CAS registry, which includes centers entering CAS data as part of The Society for Vascular Surgery® Vascular Quality Initiative® (SVS VQI) Transcarotid Revascularization Surveillance Project (TSP), **“will automatically meet the data collection standards** required for initial and continued facility certification.”

What does this mean?

- TSP participation alleviates select mandates within the ruling, such as the neurological assessment requirements and Shared Decision Making (SDM).
- Specifically, SDM will *not* be required for TSP participants (though it is recommended—and facilitated through VQI's CAS registry—as it remains best practice).
- Sites should continue to include the National Clinical Trial (NCT) identifier, NCT02850588, on Medicare claims to document their participation in the study.

PATH B VQI MEMBERSHIP

VQI remains the premiere tool for centers to develop and maintain a dedicated carotid stent program for the safety of their patients, regardless of whether a center decides to join the TSP. Even with the changes resulting from NCD 20.7, you still need to collect data, track outcomes, and establish a quality improvement program.

VQI participation offers centers...

- ✓ Ability to track provider and center performance and compare to national benchmarks
- ✓ Identification of areas for quality improvement and [addressing length of stay](#)
- ✓ Robust [Quality Improvement program](#), including quality improvement toolkits, quality charters, webinars, and one-on-one mentoring for members
- ✓ Networking opportunities, including regional and national meetings, for participating centers to review outcomes data, foster collaboration, and spark innovation

In this time of change, one thing remains certain: it has become more imperative than ever to monitor and maintain quality across your *full* carotid program. We're ready to be your guide. Learn more about your options [here](#) or reach out to us at vqi@fivoshealth.com.

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