

## PPO Action Plan: For Increasing Evidence-Based Breast Biopsy

### What:

- There are 1.7 million breast biopsies each year, of which 40% are performed as an “open” surgical excision. For the large majority of these, minimally invasive should be the evidence-based approach.
- Between 60-80% of biopsies are negative, meaning there is no cancer.

### The Issue:

- Clinical practice guidelines recommend use of minimally invasive breast biopsy (MIBB, or needle biopsy) for diagnosis *before* surgery in the vast majority of cases.
- Open excision – now 40% of cases, is rarely required for clinical reasons.
- Since most biopsies are negative, MIBB – a non invasive outpatient procedure, avoids a large number of surgeries.
- If a minimally invasive biopsy is positive, surgery can be carefully planned with a treatment team and only one surgery is needed rather than two.

### PPO Opportunity:

- MIBB eliminates the need for surgery in the large percentage of women with benign findings.
- Patients experience less pain and scarring and no hospital stay.
- **Reducing the rate of open biopsies to 10% instead of the current 35-40% could save \$1.1 billion based on current Medicare rates.**

**The Action(s) Needed:** PPOs have an essential role in promoting use of breast care Centers of Excellence and encouraging evidence-based best practice of all providers in breast referral, diagnosis and treatment. PPOs can:

- Contract with qualified, accredited providers and facilities
- Develop evidence-based medical policy that promotes appropriate use of MIBB
- Educate physicians on standards of care for diagnosis of breast abnormalities
- Measure and provide feedback on breast care quality
- Work with employers/payers to create benefit incentives for patients to seek care at Breast Centers of Excellence and/or to choose MIBB
- Review reimbursement rates for open and minimally invasive surgery to ensure physician incentives are aligned with evidence-based best practice
- Evaluate pathology contracting and reimbursement policy to ensure breast biopsies are reviewed by specialized practitioners
- Guide patients to comprehensive breast health information and facilitate patient referrals to the best practitioners

Visit AAPPO's Improving Women's Health website at:  
[http://www.aappo.org/AAPPO\\_WOMENS\\_HEALTH/WH\\_01.cfm](http://www.aappo.org/AAPPO_WOMENS_HEALTH/WH_01.cfm)  
For links to guidelines, evidence, and quality websites

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