

10 Questions to Ask Your Prior Authorization Vendor

1 How are your payor relationships structured?

It is essential to know whether the vendor is directly integrated or whether data is simply being scraped from a payor's portal or policy guidelines. Just one connection to a vendor who provides direct connectivity provides you with the most efficient real-time data exchange. It is also important to understand what type of payor coverage is available.

2 What tasks of the prior authorization process are automated?

Be sure to understand if the vendor has capabilities to automate the following steps: determining if a prior authorization is required, gathering relevant clinical documentation, processing payor questionnaires, obtaining status inquiry and appealing any denied authorizations. Are both the administrative and clinical submissions be automated? All of these are critical tasks that should be automated to reap the benefits and maximize return on investment (ROI).

3 What technical expertise do you have to handle Electronic Health Record (EHR) configuration and workflow?

Does the vendor have a dedicated team of healthcare experts that understand your existing workflow? How do they plan to connect to your EHR? Are they using standard 278, Application Programming Interface (API), or custom connections? There are automation vendors that only offer Robotic Processing Automation (RPA) or Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology to automate tasks, but do not bring any proprietary technology to the table. These solutions often fall short of the promises delivered.

4 What are your capabilities to scale with my organization as our needs change?

Are there batch requirements or volume constraints? What is the vendor's plan to expand to new specialties? Has the software intentionally been designed for medical prior authorizations? Or is it an add-on to automating other processes? It is important to know how your vendor will work with you as your needs change to avoid minimum requirements (at least at the onset).

5 What do end users say about the vendor's technology?

What are the Prior Authorization Requestors saying about the tool? How does it integrate into their current workflow? Does it help them to be more productive? Do they have higher staff satisfaction because of this automation? You may want to ask for a reference call from the vendor. It may be beneficial to speak with other VP/Directors of Revenue Cycle or VP/Directors of Patient Access to validate the solution and how it works for them.

6 How does integration work?

What does integration require from the provider and the vendor? Does the vendor integrate with your EHR? What experience does the vendor have integrating into your EHR without standard connections? How long does it take to integrate? What experience do they have adapting to your unique technical situation? It is important to understand what experience your vendor has with medical prior authorization automation and ensure they can explain how they integrate and what the plan and timeline would look like for your organization.

7 What is your standard implementation timeline?

We often hear from providers that they had a rocky implementation with a previous vendor. Be sure to ask direct questions to understand the vendor's implementation timeline. Is there a dedicated implementation team from the vendor? How long is the timeline? Is there a comprehensive project plan that is simple with dates and action items? Is there a workbook for testing mock scenarios? Are there training sessions for end users?

8 How many resources do I need to allocate for implementation, on average?

Resourcing for a provider is often a roadblock for a speedy implementation. Make sure you understand from the vendor the resources needed on your side to implement the solution. The number of resources varies based on your EHR and workflow. Setting these expectations up front so you can get the resources you need for a smooth integration is important.

9 What standard reporting is available to me?

Data and reporting tools provide you with real, tangible insights on how to be even more efficient with your prior authorizations. Ask to see examples of what reporting is available. Does it compare against baseline numbers before automation was implemented to ensure efficiency has been created and a strong ROI is being achieved?

10 Do you have a Customer Success team to respond to questions and concerns in a timely manner?

To ensure ongoing success, you should understand who you can contact to ask questions. Will the vendor have a dedicated team or contact person? Are they available only on weekdays or 24/7/365? How can you contact them - phone, email, chat?

Talk to a prior authorization expert today.

Visit PriorAuthNow.com to request a demo.