THE ECOSYSTEM OF EVIDENCE

Navigating the future of the ecosystem of evidence

Artificial intelligence and digital transformation in research and healthcare

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The Washington State Health Technology Assessment Program

Impact of controversial treatments for musculoskeletal conditions among injured workers

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Background

The Washington State Health Technology Assessment Program (HTAP) was established in 2006 by the WA State legislature. The Health Technology Clinical Committee reviews a formal evidence report, relying on the highest quality evidence. Decisions are based on safety, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness. The final decision is Cover without Conditions, Cover with Conditions, or Not Cover. These decisions are mandatory for state health care agencies to implement.

https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp0907384

HEALTH TECHNOLOGY CLINICAL COMMITTEE DETERMINATIONS

Topic summary (2007-2020)

Last Updated:10/30/2020

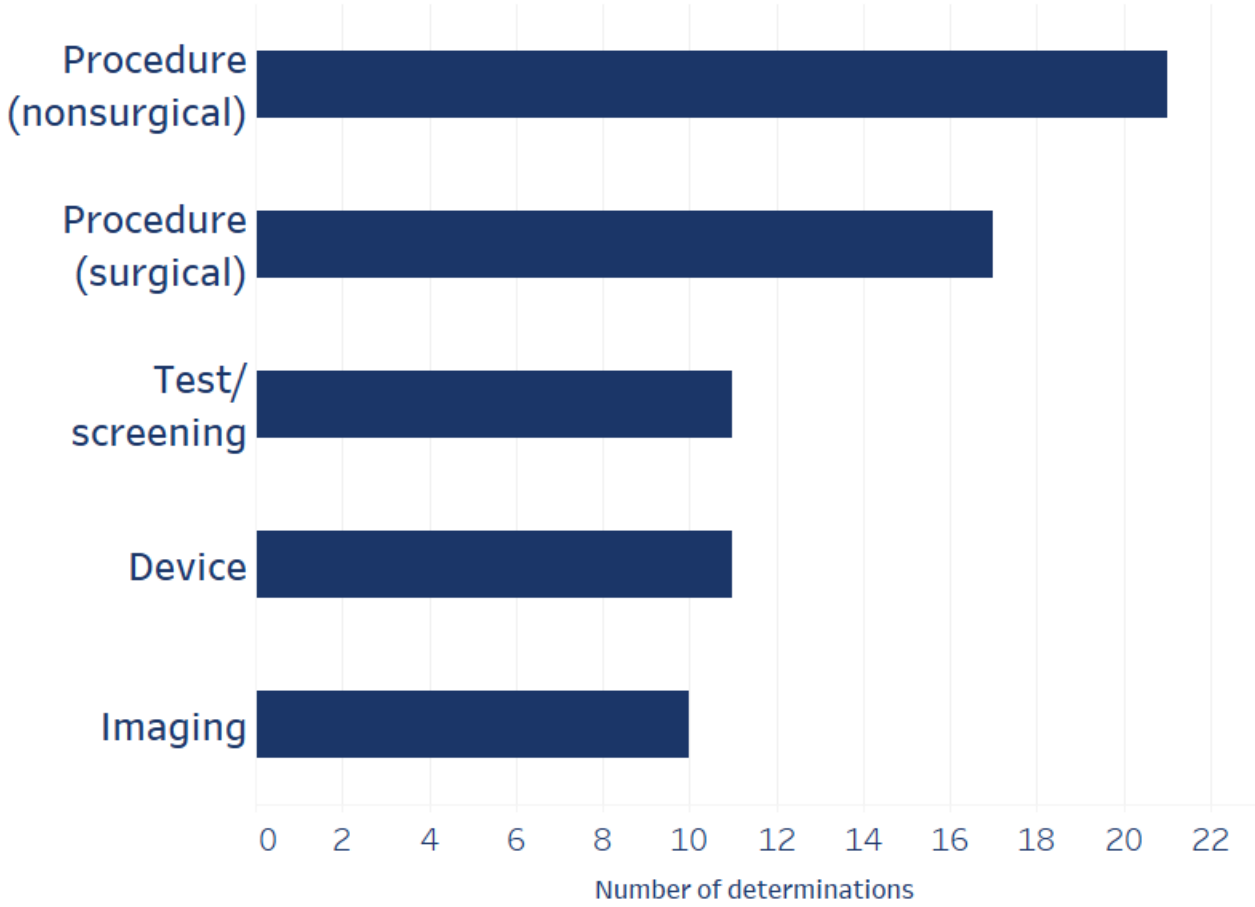
Washington State Health Care Authority

Total topics
70

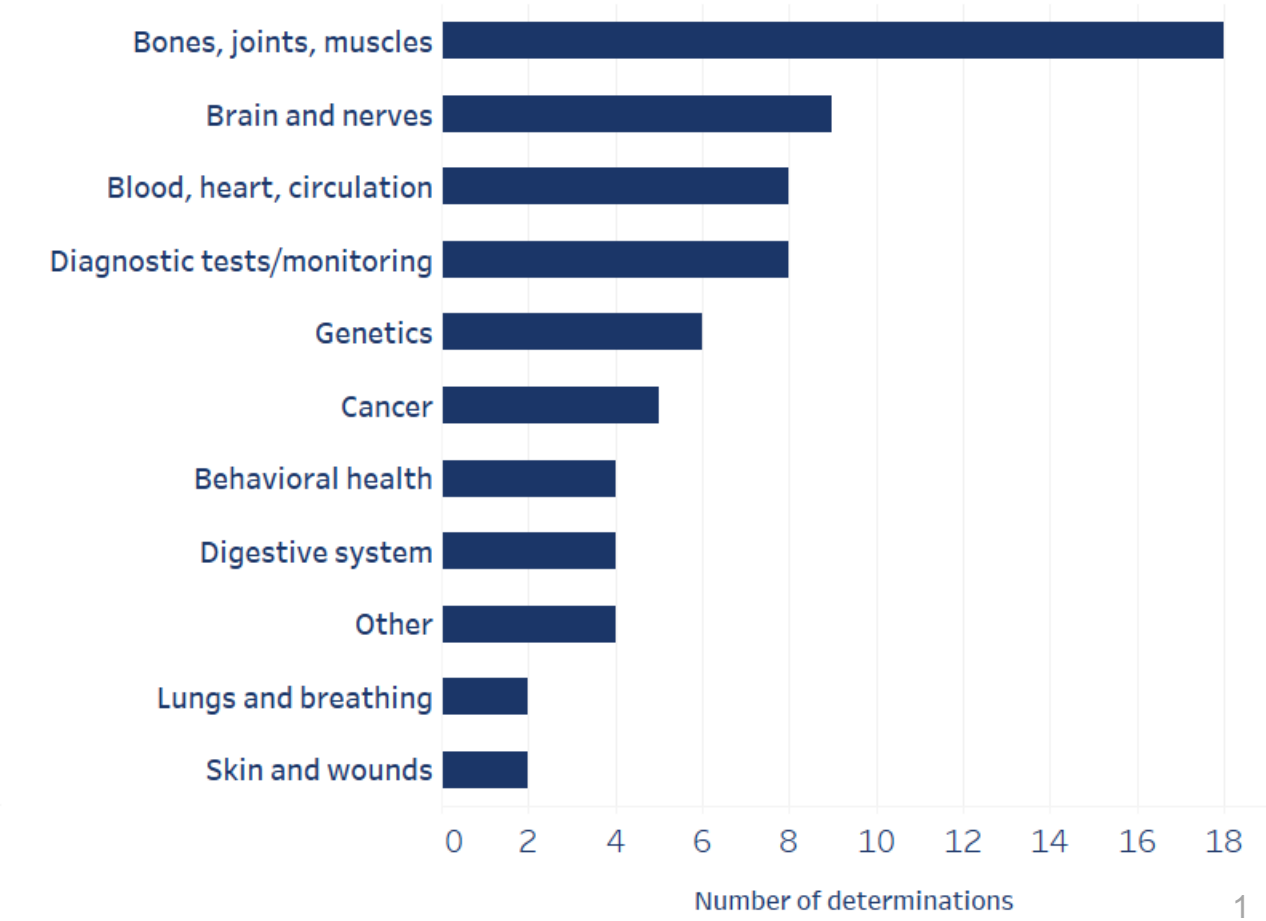
Latest Benefit Coverage

	Percent	Total
Covered	6%	4
Not covered	30%	21
Cover with Conditions	64%	45

Type of intervention



Condition



Aims

Describe the impact of HTAP decisions on the incidence of four controversial interventions for painful musculoskeletal conditions: lumbar fusion, meniscectomy for degenerative knees, medial branch block/facet neurotomy, and spinal cord stimulation

Methods

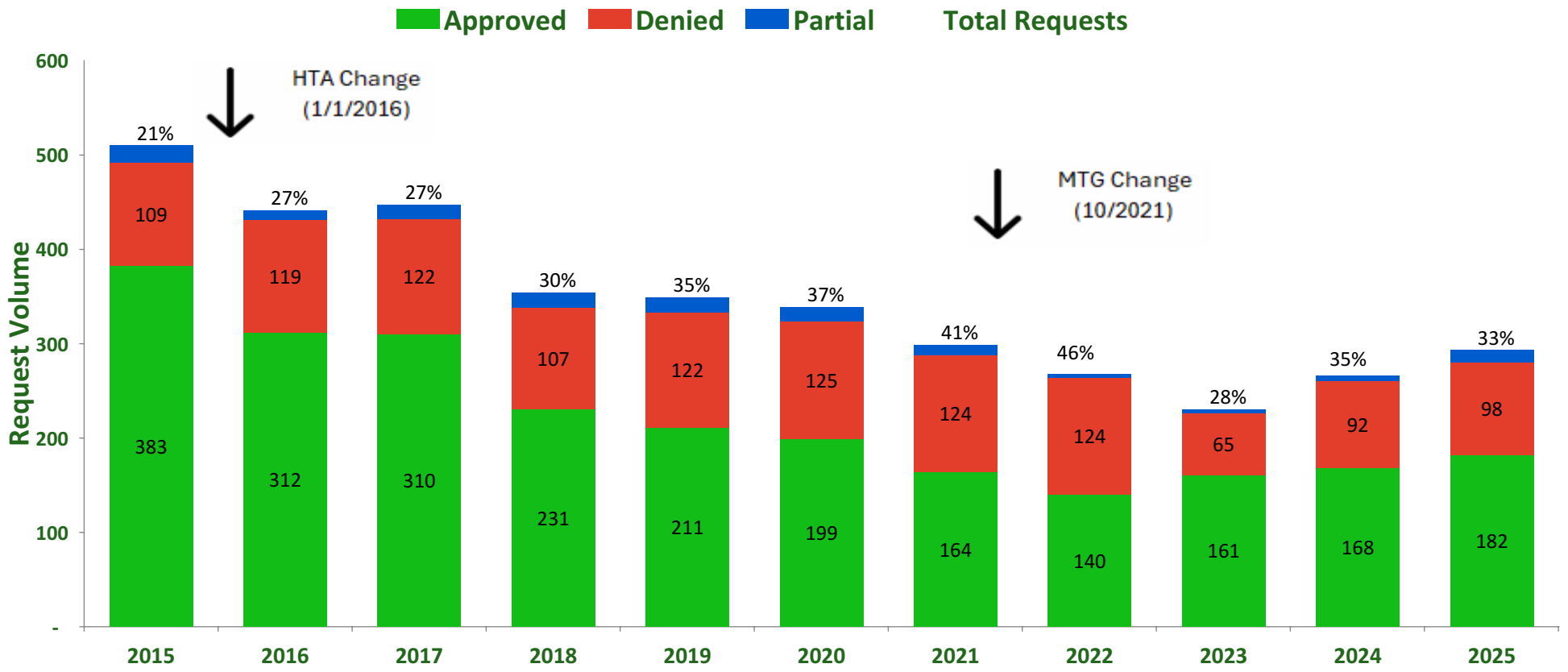
Use detailed utilization review data from the state workers' compensation system to present temporal trends in the four controversial interventions over the past decade

Lumbar fusion

- 2016-HTAP decision to not cover lumbar fusion for degenerative disc disease (primarily for axial back pain)
- The Dept of Labor and Industries uses medical treatment guidelines for requested fusions that are not primarily related to degenerative disc disease (e.g., spondylolisthesis ≥Grade 2, measurable instability, central spinal stenosis with claudication)

Lumbar Fusion

1/1/2015 - 12/31/2025



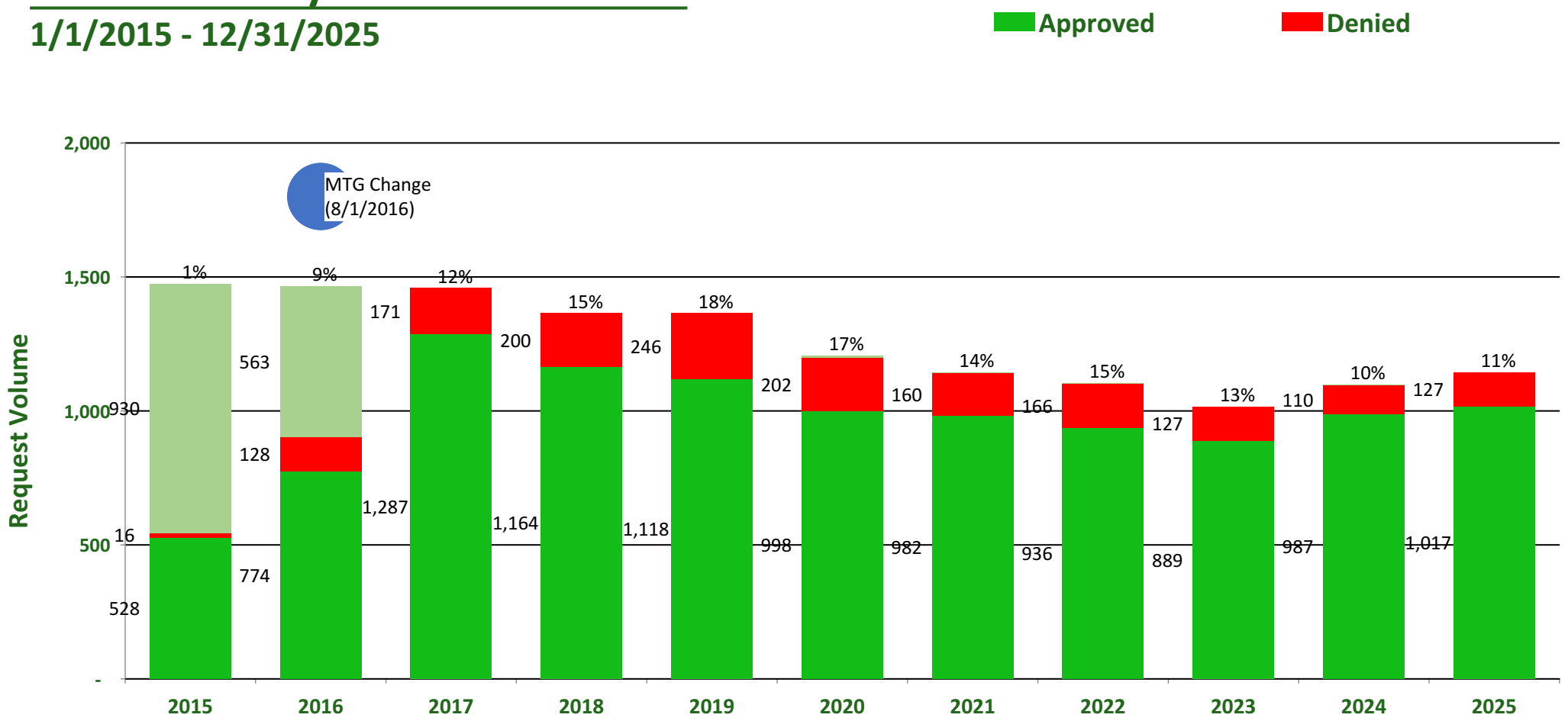
	Requests	Workers
2015	510	466
2016	441	417
2017	447	418
2018	354	332
2019	349	325

	Requests	Workers
2020	339	326
2021	299	286
2022	268	246
2023	230	211
2024	266	237
2025	293	262

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Meniscectomy: Review Volumes

1/1/2015 - 12/31/2025



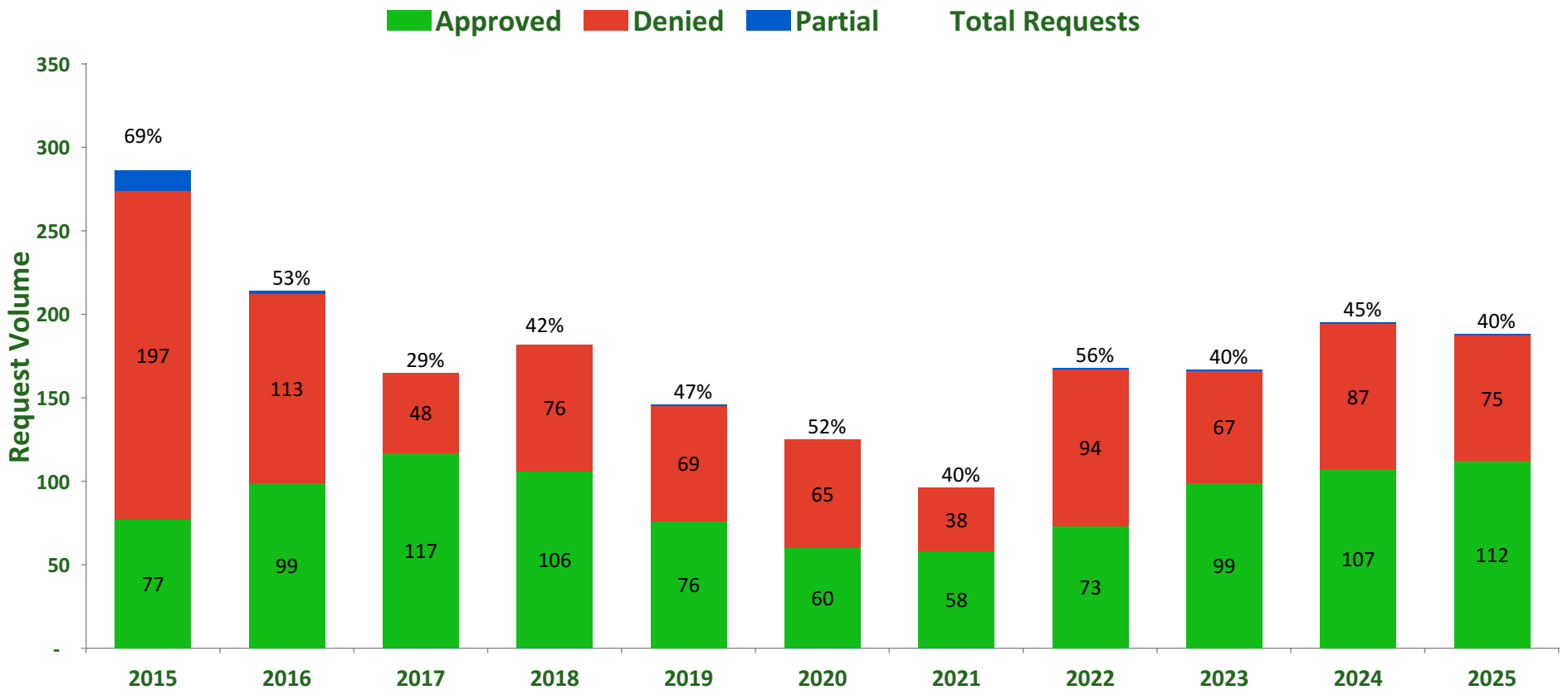
	Requests	Workers
2015	1,474	1,427
2016	1,465	1,413
2017	1,458	1,417
2018	1,364	1,315
2019	1,364	1,328

	Requests	Workers
2020	1,207	1,185
2021	1,143	1,113
2022	1,103	1,066
2023	1,016	988
2024	1,098	1,062
2025	1,144	1,106

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Cervical Medial Branch Block

1/1/2015 - 12/31/2025



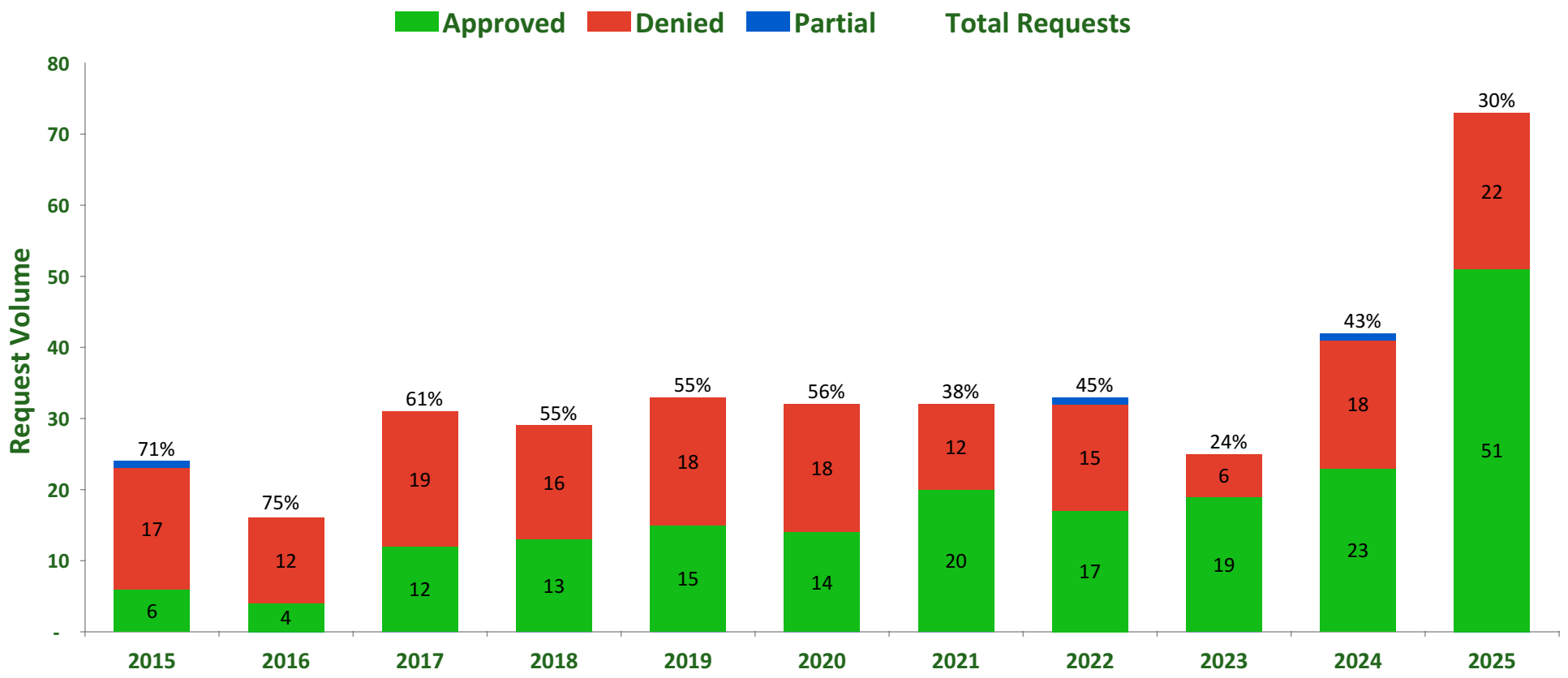
	Requests	Workers
2015	286	174
2016	214	147
2017	165	128
2018	182	141
2019	146	119

	Requests	Workers
2020	125	111
2021	96	85
2022	168	141
2023	167	145
2024	195	162
2025	188	165

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Cervical Facet Neurotomy

1/1/2015 - 12/31/2025



	Requests	Workers
2015	24	20
2016	16	15
2017	31	30
2018	29	26
2019	33	28

	Requests	Workers
2020	32	28
2021	32	31
2022	33	32
2023	25	23
2024	42	41
2025	73	70

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Spinal Cord Stimulation

Food and Drug Administration warning letter sent to all physicians due to 428 reported deaths over just a few years.

HTAP-2010-not covered

-2024-covered with conditions, but not for workers comp or other legally involved cases

Requests for presentation or other questions

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