<INSERT DATE>, 2020

NAME

TITLE

INSURANCE CARRIER

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE ZIP CODE

Delivered via email to: EMAIL ADDRESS

Dear TITLE NAME:

<INSERT PRACTICE/PHYSICIAN NAME> is writing today to make INSURANCE CARRIER aware of our concerns regarding new prior authorization (PA) requirements for Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Inhibitors for Ocular Indications published in Commercial and Medicare clinical policy bulletin (CPBs) number: POLICY NUMBER. It is particularly concerning that Aetna would implement this requirement during a Public Health Emergency and after CMS has urged plans to exercise flexibility in this area.

<INSERT INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE/PHYSICIAN>

I.E- GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, PATIENT MIX

WE/I ARE/AM concerned about patient care delays and onerous physician burden issues related to POLICY NUMBER. As of EFFECTIVE DATE, all vascular endothelial growth factor inhibitor drugs with ocular indications require PA, including treatment with Avastin (bevacizumab) which is a preferred drug by INSURANCE CARRIER. Substantial delays in care because of PA requirements put patients with Diabetic Retinopathy and Macular Degeneration at immediate risk of permanent vision loss. In addition, the inclusion of PA for bevacizumab does not seem well considered given the first line nature of this therapy.

<INSERT PERSONAL STORY IF APPLICABLE>

I.E-PATIENT ACCESS ISSUE BECAUSE OF THIS POLICY, THE OVERALL BURDEN OF PA, BURDEN DURING THE PHE

As has been well documented, the PA process already consumes valuable physician and staff time, exacerbates costs to physician practices may negatively impact patients by delaying much-needed treatment. The additional burden that the current pandemic is placing on the healthcare system is creating extreme medical practice burden and patient access issues. During the pandemic, current practice resources for scheduling and delivering non-coronavirus related urgent cases have been limited. During this public health emergency, removing barriers to care for patients in need of vital medical, surgical and biopharmaceutical treatments — whether COVID-related or not — is more important now than ever before.

Several of the Nation’s health care plans have lessened barriers to care through the suspension of some PA related to COVID-19, and the Academy appreciates this accommodation. On April 21, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) urged plans to waive the burden of PA. Stating that plans may choose to waive or relax plan PA requirements at any time in order to facilitate access to services with less burden on beneficiaries, plans, and providers. Though some COVID flexibilities have been enacted our members have reported instances where major health plans’ responses to prior authorization requests have been significantly delayed throughout the country due to COVID-19. The PA requirements for vascular endothelial growth factor inhibitors for ocular indications published in POLICY NUMBER create substantial burden for providers and put patients at risk for losing their vision. We hope INSURANCE CARRIER will reconsider these PA requirements and work to streamline the delivery of vital eye care.

Sincerely,

<INSERT SIGNATURE>