



## Communicating with Insurance Carriers on Prior Authorization (PA) Policies for Anti-VEGF Medications

When drafting a letter to an insurance carrier discussing their prior authorization policies, include the following talking points as appropriate.

- Concerns with substantial patient care delays – immediate risk of permanent vision loss
  - Provide specific case studies
  - Include medical literature stating delay in anti-VEGF care can impact the patient
  - Policies should provide exceptions for more urgent cases
  - Some plans have delayed response to PA requests and put patients at risk for losing their vision.
- Onerous physician and administrative burden
  - Exacerbates costs to physicians' practices
  - Extreme medical practice burden
- PA for preferred drugs (e.g. Avastin) impose additional barriers for treatment
  - Low cost option and first line therapy
- Discuss the timing of the new policy
  - During a public health emergency (PHE)
  - Increase the time of in-person encounter for urgent and same day injections
  - Practice resources are limited due to the PHE for scheduling and administrative duties
  - Remove barriers for patient care during the PHE and beyond
  - Many insurance carriers have lessened barriers during the PHE
    - On April 21, 2020, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) urged plans to waive the burden of PA to facilitate access to services and less burden on patients, plans and providers.
- Lack of proper notice and communication with practices
  - Announcement of new policies sent after effective date
  - Not enough time for practices to train on and implement new policy
- Encourage insurance carriers to reconsider PA requirements and streamline delivery.

### Tips:

- The letter should be addressed to the payer medical director or executive team.
- If you are a member, consider cc: your state ophthalmological society.
- Confirm the best route of delivery (e.g. USPS, electronic email).

- Provide copies of the communication to physician owners and senior management.
- Reviewed by and signed by an ophthalmologist in the practice.
- Provide contact information at the practice and encourage further discussion.
- Share your experiences by emailing [healthpolicy@aao.org](mailto:healthpolicy@aao.org)