

August 30, 2018

Arthritis Foundation Statement on CMS Guidance Providing for Indication-Based Drug Coverage in Part D

The Arthritis Foundation released the following advocacy statement in response to the administration's announcement of new guidance to Medicare Part D plans about the use of indications-based formulary design:

“Over the last fifteen years, the Medicare prescription drug benefit has provided beneficiaries with chronic diseases like arthritis a pathway to access innovative therapies that were previously out of reach. Yesterday's guidance from CMS to permit indication-based drug coverage in Medicare Part D represents a step backward from the program's promise to these beneficiaries. We urge the administration to rescind this guidance and vigorously engage the patient stakeholder community to fully understand the impact of the proposed policy on beneficiaries and their health and well-being.

Allowing plans to limit formulary coverage of a drug only for the specific indication for which it is most effective further restrains the already narrow treatment options available for beneficiaries with inflammatory forms of arthritis. Beneficiaries with rheumatoid arthritis, for instance, often must try multiple drugs before finding the one that works best for them. The proposal also disregards shared decision-making between the beneficiary and his or her provider to select the most clinically appropriate therapy.

The Arthritis Foundation is committed to working with the administration to find policy solutions that reduce beneficiary out-of-pocket costs while preserving access to life-changing therapies.”

