

September 18, 2018

The Honorable Diana DeGette
2111 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Sign-on Letter: CMS Guidance Needed to Reduce Prior Authorization Barriers in Medicare Advantage

Dear Congresswoman DeGette:

On behalf of the Colorado Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (CSEPS) which represents more than 175 Colorado ophthalmologists, I am writing to urge you to join Reps. Phil Roe (R-TN) and Ami Bera (D-CA) signing on a bipartisan letter to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) expressing concerns regarding the lack of prior authorization guidance for Medicare Advantage health care plans. The letter requests that CMS provide additional direction to these plans to increase transparency, streamline the prior authorization process and minimize the impact on patients.

One in every three people with Medicare is enrolled in a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan. Under current law, MA plans may not create barriers to care that do not exist within the original Medicare program. However, physicians are reporting that MA plans have imposed increasingly onerous prior authorization requirements for medical services that are adversely impacting patient access to medically necessary care. CSEPS, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and other physician organizations are seeking regulatory guidance that streamlines MA prior authorization requirements to reduce administrative burdens on physician practices and lower barriers to patient care for all Medicare beneficiaries.

I encourage you to support Reps. Roe and Bera's efforts to improve oversight and obtain the necessary guidance from CMS to reduce unnecessary prior authorization burdens for physicians and Medicare Advantage patients. To sign onto the letter, or for more information, please contact Aaron Bill (Rep. Roe) at aaron.bill@mail.house.gov or Erin O'Quinn (Rep. Bera) at erin.o'quinn@mail.house.gov.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the AAO Director of Congressional Affairs, Rebecca Hyder, at 202-737-6662 or rhyder@ao.org regarding any questions on prior authorization issues. I am also happy to discuss this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Leonard Seibold, MD
President

