Reference number
1616-A

SPECIALTY GUIDELINE MANAGEMENT

ARANESP (darbepoetin alfa)

POLICY

I. INDICATIONS

The indications below including FDA-approved indications and compendial uses are considered a covered benefit provided that all the approval criteria are met and the member has no exclusions to the prescribed therapy.

A. FDA-Approved Indications

1. Treatment of anemia due to chronic kidney disease (CKD), including patients on dialysis and patients not on dialysis.
2. Treatment of anemia in patients with non-myeloid malignancies where anemia is due to the effect of concomitant myelosuppressive chemotherapy, and upon initiation, there is a minimum of two additional months of planned chemotherapy.

Limitations of Use:

1. Aranesp has not been shown to improve quality of life, fatigue, or patient well-being.
2. Aranesp is not indicated for use:
   - In patients with cancer receiving hormonal agents, biologic products, or radiotherapy, unless also receiving concomitant myelosuppressive chemotherapy.
   - In patients with cancer receiving myelosuppressive chemotherapy when the anticipated outcome is cure.
   - As a substitute for RBC transfusions in patients who require immediate correction of anemia

B. Compendial Uses

1. Symptomatic anemia in patients with myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS)
2. Anemia in patients whose religious beliefs forbid blood transfusions
3. Symptomatic anemia in patients with primary myelofibrosis, post-polycythemia vera myelofibrosis, and post-essential thrombocythemia myelofibrosis

All other indications are considered experimental/investigational and are not a covered benefit.

II. CRITERIA FOR INITIAL APPROVAL

Note: Requirements regarding pretreatment hemoglobin level exclude values due to a recent transfusion.

A. Anemia Due to CKD

Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for members with pretreatment hemoglobin < 10 g/dL.

B. Anemia Due to Myelosuppressive Chemotherapy

Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for members with nonmyeloid malignancy who meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. The intent of chemotherapy is non-curative
2. Pretreatment hemoglobin < 10 g/dL

C. Anemia in MDS
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for members with pretreatment hemoglobin < 10 g/dL.

D. Anemia in Members Whose Religious Beliefs Forbid Blood Transfusions
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for members with pretreatment hemoglobin < 10 g/dL.

E. Anemia in Primary Myelofibrosis (MF), Post-polycythemia Vera MF, and Post-Essential Thrombocythemia MF
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for members who meet ALL of the following criteria:
1. Member has symptomatic anemia
2. Pretreatment hemoglobin < 10 g/dL
3. Pretreatment serum erythropoietin level < 500 mU/mL

III. CONTINUATION OF THERAPY

Note: Requirements regarding current hemoglobin level exclude values due to a recent transfusion.

For all indications below: all members (including new members) requesting authorization for continuation of therapy after at least 12 weeks of ESA treatment must show a response with a rise in hemoglobin of ≥ 1 g/dL. Members who completed less than 12 weeks of ESA treatment and have not yet responded with a rise in hemoglobin of ≥ 1 g/dL may be granted authorization of up to 12 weeks to allow for sufficient time to demonstrate a response.

A. Anemia due to CKD
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for continuation of treatment when the current hemoglobin is ≤ 12 g/dL.

B. Anemia Due to Myelosuppressive Chemotherapy
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for continuation of treatment in members with nonmyeloid malignancy who meet BOTH of the following criteria:
1. The intent of chemotherapy is non-curative
2. Current hemoglobin is < 11 g/dL

C. Anemia in MDS
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for continuation of treatment when the current hemoglobin is ≤ 12 g/dL.

D. Anemia in members whose religious beliefs forbid blood transfusions
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for continuation of treatment when the current hemoglobin is ≤ 12 g/dL.

E. Anemia in Primary Myelofibrosis, Post-polycythemia Vera Myelofibrosis, and Post-Essential Thrombocythemia Myelofibrosis
Authorization of 12 weeks may be granted for continuation of treatment when the current hemoglobin is ≤ 12 g/dL.

IV. REFERENCES

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