

Provider Update

Help Us Meet the Measure: HEDIS Requirements for Disease-Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drug Therapy for Rheumatoid Arthritis

Background: Amerigroup¹ periodically sends reminders about Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS)² recommendations to keep you informed and ensure quality care for our members.

✦ **What this means to you:** No action is necessary — for your information only.

What members are included in this measure?

This HEDIS measure evaluates all members 18 years and older who are diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), except those who are pregnant or HIV positive and were dispensed prescriptions for Disease-Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drugs (DMARDs).

What treatments are available for my RA patients?

Early treatment is the optimal intervention for preserving joint integrity. The American College of Rheumatology's guidelines advocate use of DMARD therapy within the first three months following a definitive diagnosis³.

If appropriate, please consider initiating treatment with a formulary DMARD like methotrexate, leflunomide, hydroxychloroquine or sulfasalazine. Other agents like Humira, Enbrel and Remicade are also available through prior authorization when medical necessity criteria are met. Visit providers.amerigroup.com for a complete list of formulary medications used to treat RA.

Helpful tips

- Prescribe DMARDs to your patients diagnosed with RA.
- Use the correct diagnosis codes for RA once a definitive diagnosis is made. ICD-9 diagnosis codes for RA include 714.0, 714.1, 714.2 and 714.81.
- Carefully review codes before submitting claims and do not submit claims with RA diagnosis codes for members with joint pain or other findings that require further testing. This HEDIS measure uses claims information to evaluate performance, and incorrect claims submissions will not accurately reflect the care you provided.
- Do not use RA diagnosis codes to rule out RA. Other codes like 719.4X for joint pain, unspecified or 719.5X for stiffness of joints can be used while the causes of a member's joint ailments are investigated.
- Coordinate care with your patient's rheumatologist or other specialists. For help referring a patient to an in-network rheumatologist, call your local Provider Relations representative or our Provider Services team.

If you have questions about this communication, received this fax in error or need assistance with any other item, contact your local Provider Relations representative or call our Provider Services team at 1-800-454-3730 (Medicaid) or 1-866-805-4589 (Medicare).

References

1. In New Mexico, Amerigroup Community Care of New Mexico, Inc.
2. HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.
3. American College of Rheumatology. (2012). Update of the 2008 American College of Rheumatology Recommendations for the Use of Disease-Modifying Antirheumatic Drugs and Biologic Agents in the Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis. *Arthritis Care & Research* 2012; 64 (No. 5). p. 625–639.

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