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Medica Health  
401 Carlson Pkwy, Hopkins, MN 553

December 16, 2016

Dear Medica:

On behalf of rheumatologists across the state of Minnesota and the patients we serve, we are writing to express our concern about the change starting January 1, 2017 of Medica's prescription drug coverage to CVS Caremark's Advanced Care Formulary, the most restrictive in its coverage with many prescription drug exclusions. We are concerned these formulary changes will severely limit patient access to needed therapies by eliminating many therapeutic options for patients suffering from a variety of chronic diseases and the lack of timely communication to impacted health care providers and patients to respond and ensure proper patient care. We ask that you address these two issues by delaying the implementation timeline so there is no disruption in care as well as consider whether the well-being and overall healthcare of the patients and families covered by Medica and its CVS Caremark formulary would be better served by alternate formulary restriction efforts.

#### **Limited Therapeutic Options for a Variety of Chronic Diseases**

As of January 1, 2017, Medica's change to the CVS Caremark Advanced Care Formulary will impact many therapies to treat chronic diseases, including psoriatic disease, which will no longer be available to patients. For approximately 500 patients with psoriatic diseases, the formulary change will require stable patients to change their prescription drug and require step therapy of two biologic agents with FDA black box warnings before receiving coverage for their current therapy or having access to other therapies without the most severe FDA warning.

This change also impacts patients suffering other chronic diseases. For example, the current formulary has 11 branded prescription drugs available for multiple sclerosis, of which only 6 will be available, and for patients with hepatitis C, Medica's new formulary severely limits covered therapeutic options from 13 branded prescription drugs currently available to only 3 on formulary in 2017.

#### **Lack of Timely Communications to Health Care Providers and Patients**

At this time while the Medica 2017 formulary is posted on their website, there has been no known communication from Medica directly to health care providers in Minnesota and the only known reported communication to Medica enrollees about these changes have been letters sent to impacted patients with psoriatic disease. These communications alert stable patients that their existing treatment will not be extended and also will not be “grandfathered” into the new CVS Caremark restrictive formulary. Medica enrollees are also informed that they MUST change to a new drug on CVS’s formulary by 1/1/2017. To force Medica enrollees to make potentially lengthy and disease altering changes to their medication by the start of the new year is a great challenge and hardship. Patients must schedule to meet with their health care provider, complete lab work and discuss other therapeutic options that may not be as efficacious or safe.

As the second largest health plan in Minnesota serving more than 1.6 million members in the Midwest, these changes will negatively impact Minnesotans across the state. On behalf of the Coalition of State Rheumatologists and the Rheumatology Association of the Dakotas and Minnesota, we respectfully request Medica to:

1. Continue coverage and enable stable patients to be “grandfathered” into the new year.
2. Provide proper and sufficient notification to health care providers and Medica enrollees of these and any future formulary changes.
3. If a specific drug is deemed to be the recommended treatment by a health care provider, enable a patient to access the needed therapy through the prior authorization process.

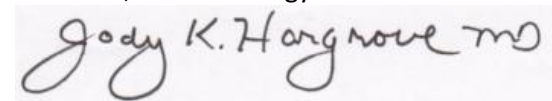
We respectfully request your response by Friday, December 23.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael P. Stevens, MD  
President, Coalition of State Rheumatologists

Handwritten signature of Michael P. Stevens, MD in black ink.

Dr. Jody K. Hargrove, MD  
President, Rheumatology Association of Minnesota and the Dakotas

Handwritten signature of Jody K. Hargrove, MD in black ink.