

**Gary R. Feldman, MD, FACR**  
President

May 9, 2023

**Madelaine A. Feldman, MD, FACR**  
VP, Advocacy & Government Affairs

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CVS Health

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Michelle Gourdine, MD  
Chief Medical Officer  
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**Leyka M. Barbosa, MD, FACR**  
Director

*Sent via email to [Sree.Chaguturu@cvshealth.com](mailto:Sree.Chaguturu@cvshealth.com), [J.khaldun@cvshealth.com](mailto:J.khaldun@cvshealth.com), and [Michelle.gourdine@cvshealth.com](mailto:Michelle.gourdine@cvshealth.com)*

**Kostas Botsoglou, MD**  
Director

**Michael S. Brooks, MD, FACP, FACR**  
Director

RE: Treatment Options for Lupus Nephritis

**Amish J. Dave, MD, MPH**  
Director

Dear Drs. Chaguturu, Khaldun, and Gourdine,

**Harry Gewanter, MD, FAAP, MACR**  
Director

The Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) is a national organization composed of over 30 state and regional professional rheumatology societies. CSRO was formed by physicians to ensure excellence and access to the highest quality care for patients with rheumatologic, autoimmune, and musculoskeletal disease. It is with this in mind that we write to you regarding CVS Caremark's coverage policy for Lupkynis (voclosporin).

**Adrienne R. Hollander, MD**  
Director

**Firas Kassab, MD, FACR**  
Director

**Robert W. Levin, MD**  
Director

CVS Caremark's coverage policy indicates that Lupkynis is excluded from coverage and not medically necessary for the treatment of Lupus Nephritis (LN). CSRO believes that this coverage policy is inappropriate, and will meaningfully reduce the effective management of LN for enrollees of plans whose formulary is managed by CVS Caremark. This is particularly concerning given the disproportionate impact this policy will have on underserved patient populations. Lupkynis is specifically indicated for lupus nephritis, which is known to have greater impact on women of color with lupus. This leads to the appearance of discrimination against a uniquely disadvantaged population.

**Amar Majjhoo, MD**  
Director

**Gregory W. Niemer, MD**  
Director

**Joshua Stalow, MD**  
Director

Lupkynis has a unique mechanism of action that represents an important option for the treatment of patients for whom the alternative covered therapies are inappropriate, poorly tolerated or have been ineffective. The alternatives covered by CVS Caremark do not represent a comprehensive approach to the treatment of LN. As rheumatologists, we all have patients that have failed or cannot tolerate the other drugs on your formulary. This would result in increased inflammation leading to irreversible damage to organs such as the kidney. Increased corticosteroid usage in lupus patients has been shown to lead to earlier cardiovascular problems, osteoporosis, avascular necrosis, glucocorticoid induced diabetes among the many other steroid side effects.

**HEADQUARTER OFFICE**

**Ann Marie Moss**  
Executive Director

Given the lack of compelling medical rationale for removing this drug from the toolkit

that rheumatologists have to treat patients with LN, it appears that the coverage exclusions are designed to impede access by funneling patients and providers through a cumbersome exceptions process that delays, and potentially fails, to provide the right care in a timely fashion for lupus patients. Administrative delays such as this result in irreversible damage to these, often very young, patients.

CSRO requests that CVS Caremark reinstate coverage of Lupkynis. CSRO is not requesting that CVS Caremark eliminate certain trial and failure requirements for covered alternatives where appropriate. However, reinstating coverage would ensure that the right medication for treatment of LN is available when warranted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Madelaine Feldman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Madelaine Feldman, MD  
Vice President, Advocacy & Government Affairs