

POLICY: Neurology – Aduhelm Utilization Management Medical Policy

- Aduhelm™ (aducanumab-avwa injection for intravenous use – Biogen)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/15/2021

LAST REVISION DATE: 09/16/2024

COVERAGE CRITERIA FOR: All Aspirus Medicare Plans

OVERVIEW

Aduhelm, an amyloid beta-directed antibody, is indicated for the **treatment of Alzheimer’s disease**.¹

This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on reduction in amyloid beta plaques observed in patients treated with Aduhelm.¹ Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification of clinical benefit in confirmatory trial(s).

Disease Overview

An estimated 6.9 million Americans ≥ 65 years of age are living with Alzheimer’s dementia in 2024, with 73% of these people ≥ 75 years of age.² The number and proportion of older adults who have mild cognitive impairment due to Alzheimer’s disease is difficult to estimate; however, a rough approximation suggests that 5 to 7 million older Americans may have mild cognitive impairment due to Alzheimer’s disease. People with mild cognitive impairment due to Alzheimer’s disease have biomarker evidence of brain changes due to the disease in addition to subtle problems with memory and thinking. Biomarker evidence includes abnormal levels of amyloid beta as evidenced on positron emission tomography (PET) scans and in analysis of cerebrospinal fluid, and decreased metabolism of glucose as shown on PET scans. These cognitive problems may be noticeable to the individual family members and friends, but not to others, and they do not interfere with the person’s ability to carry out everyday activities. The mild changes in cognitive abilities occur when the brain can no longer compensate for the damage and death of nerve cells due to Alzheimer’s disease.

POLICY STATEMENT

Prior authorization is recommended for medical benefit coverage of Aduhelm. Approval is recommended for those who meet the Criteria and Dosing for the listed indication(s). Extended approvals are allowed if the patient continues to meet the Criteria and Dosing. All approvals are provided for the duration noted below.

Documentation: Documentation is required where noted in the criteria as **[documentation required]**. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, chart notes, laboratory tests, claims records, and/or other information.

This policy incorporates Medicare coverage guidance as set forth in National Coverage Determinations (NCDs) and Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), as well as in companion policy articles and other guidance applicable to the relevant service areas. These documents are cited in the References section of this policy. In some cases, this guidance includes specific lists of HCPCS and ICD-10 codes to help inform the coverage determination process. The Articles that include specific lists for billing and coding purposes will be included in the Reference section of this policy. However, to the extent that this policy cites such lists of HCPCS and ICD-10 codes, they should be used for reference purposes only. The presence of a specific HCPCS or ICD-10 code in a chart or companion article to an LCD is not by itself sufficient to approve coverage. Similarly, the absence of such a code does not necessarily mean that the applicable condition or diagnosis is excluded from coverage.

Note: Conditions for coverage outlined in this Medicare Advantage Medical Policy may be less restrictive than those found in applicable National Coverage Determinations, Local Coverage Determinations and/or Local Coverage Articles. Examples of situations where this clinical policy may be less restrictive include, but are not limited to, coverage of additional indications supported by CMS-approved compendia and the exclusion from this policy of additional coverage criteria requirements outlined in applicable National Coverage Determinations, Local Coverage Determinations and/or Local Coverage Articles.

RECOMMENDED AUTHORIZATION CRITERIA

Coverage of Aduhelm is recommended in those who meet the following criteria:

FDA-Approved Indications

1. Alzheimer's Disease.

Criteria.⁵ Approve for 1 year if the patient meets the following (A, B and C):

- A) The patient has a clinical diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or mild dementia due to Alzheimer's disease **[documentation required]**; AND
- B) The presence of amyloid beta pathology consistent with Alzheimer's disease has been confirmed **[documentation required]**; AND
- C) The patient meets one of the following (i, ii or iii):
 - i. The patient is receiving the requested medication as part of a randomized controlled trial **[documentation required]** AND the trial is conducted under an investigational new drug (IND) application **[documentation required]**; OR
 - ii. The patient is receiving the requested medication as part of a prospective comparative study **[documentation required]** AND the study is CMS-approved **[documentation required]**; OR

- iii. The patient is receiving the requested medication as part of a clinical trial **[documentation required]** AND the trial is supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) **[documentation required]**.

Dosing. Approve the following dosing regimens:

- A)** Initial dosing is titrated and meets the following (i and ii):
 - i. Administer 1 mg/kg for infusions 1 and 2, administer 3 mg/kg for infusions 3 and 4, administer 6 mg/kg for infusions 5 and 6; AND
 - ii. Each dose is administered as an intravenous (IV) infusion every four weeks (at least 21 days apart); AND/OR
- B)** The maintenance dose is 10 mg/kg administered as an intravenous (IV) infusion every four weeks (at least 21 days apart).

CONDITIONS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Coverage of Aduhelm is not recommended in the following situations:

1. Coverage is not recommended for circumstances not listed in the Recommended Authorization Criteria. Criteria will be updated as new published data are available.

REFERENCES

1. Aduhelm® intravenous infusion [prescribing information]. Cambridge, MA: Biogen; August 2023.
2. Alzheimer’s Association. Alzheimer’s disease facts and figures-2024. Available at: <https://www.alz.org/media/Documents/alzheimers-facts-and-figures.pdf>. Accessed on June 6, 2024.
3. Budd Haeberlein S, Aisen PS, Barkhof F, et al. Two Randomized Phase 3 Studies of Aducanumab in Early Alzheimer’s Disease. *J Prev Alzheimers Dis.* 2022;2(9):197-210.
4. Alexander GC, Emerson S, Kesselhelm AS. Evaluation of aducanumab for Alzheimer Disease scientific evidence and regulatory review involving efficacy, safety, and futility. *JAMA.* 2021;325(17):1717-1718.
5. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. National Coverage Determination (NCD) 200.3. [Version Number 1, Effective date: 04/07/2022. Accessed June 27, 2024].

HISTORY

Type of Revision	Summary of Changes	Review Date
New Policy	--	05/11/2022
Policy revision	Updated references to NCD from decision memo to NCD 200.3	03/07/2023
Policy review	No criteria changes. Review based on commercial policy annual review.	06/27/2024
Aspirus P&T Review	Policy reviewed and approved by Aspirus P&T committee. Annual review process	09/16/2024