Glaucoma – Ophthalmic Beta-Adrenergic Blockers
Preferred Step Therapy Policy
March 2017

OVERVIEW
Glaucoma is an ocular disorder that leads to an optic neuropathy characterized by changes in the optic nerve head (optic disk) that is associated with loss of visual sensitivity and field. The two major types of glaucoma are open-angle and closed-angle. Primary open-angle glaucoma (OAG) is the most common type of glaucoma, affecting up to 3 million individuals in the US. Reduction of intraocular pressure (IOP) is essential. An elevated IOP of > 22 mmHg (ocular hypertension, [OH]) may be treated even in the absence of nerve damage, especially in patients with other risk factors for glaucoma (e.g., severe myopia, Black race, family history of glaucoma). Reduction of IOP prevents progression or even onset of glaucoma. The beta-blocker ophthalmic solutions are indicated in the treatment of elevated IOP in patients with OH or open-angle glaucoma. The expected mechanism of action through which beta-adrenergic agents reduce IOP is supposedly through reducing production of aqueous humor in the eye.

POLICY STATEMENT
A preferred step therapy program has been developed to encourage the use of one Step 1 product prior to the use of a Step 2 product. If the preferred step therapy rule is not met for a Step 2 agent at the point of service, coverage will be determined by the preferred step therapy criteria below. All approvals are provided for 1 year in duration.

AUTOMATION: Patients with a history of one Step 1 drug within the 130-day look-back period are excluded from step therapy.

Step 1: Generic betaxolol 0.5% ophthalmic solution, generic timolol maleate 0.25% and 0.5% ophthalmic solution, generic timolol maleate 0.25% and 0.5% ophthalmic gel forming solution, generic levobunolol 0.25% and 0.5% ophthalmic solution, generic carteolol 1% ophthalmic solution, generic metipranolol 0.3% ophthalmic solution

Step 2: Istalol, Betagan, Timoptic, Timoptic XE

CRITERIA
1. If the patient has tried one Step 1 product, authorization for a Step 2 product may be given.
2. No other exceptions are recommended.

References
- Istalol® ophthalmic solution [prescribing information]. Tampa, FL: Bausch & Lomb Incorporated; June 2013.
• Betoptic® ophthalmic solution [prescribing information]. Fort Worth, TX: Alcon Laboratories, Inc.; October 2006.
• Ocupress® ophthalmic solution [prescribing information]. Duluth, GA: Novartis Ophthalmics; September 2006.
• Metipranolol ophthalmic solution [prescribing information]. Fort Worth, TX: Falcon Pharmaceuticals; August 2011.