

Drug Policy:

Besremi™ (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft)

POLICY NUMBER UM ONC_1454	SUBJECT Besremi™ (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft)		DEPT/PROGRAM UM Dept	PAGE 1 OF 3
DATES COMMITTEE REVIEWED 12/08/21	APPROVAL DATE December 8, 2021	EFFECTIVE DATE December 31, 2021	COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATES 12/08/21	
PRIMARY BUSINESS OWNER: UM		COMMITTEE/BOARD APPROVAL Utilization Management Committee		
URAC STANDARDS HUM 1	NCQA STANDARDS UM 2		ADDITIONAL AREAS OF IMPACT	
CMS REQUIREMENTS	STATE/FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS		APPLICABLE LINES OF BUSINESS Commercial, Exchange, Medicaid	

I. PURPOSE

To define and describe the accepted indications for Besremi (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft) usage in the treatment of cancer, including FDA approved indications, and off-label indications.

New Century Health (NCH) is responsible for processing all medication requests from network ordering providers. Medications not authorized by NCH may be deemed as not approvable and therefore not reimbursable.

The use of this drug must be supported by one of the following: FDA approved product labeling, CMS-approved compendia, National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) clinical guidelines, or peer-reviewed literature that meets the requirements of the CMS Medicare Benefit Policy Manual Chapter 15.

II. INDICATIONS FOR USE/INCLUSION CRITERIA

A. PREFERRED MEDICATION GUIDANCE FOR INITIAL REQUEST:

1. When health plan Medicaid coverage provisions—including any applicable PDLs (Preferred Drug Lists)—conflict with the coverage provisions in this drug policy, health plan Medicaid coverage provisions take precedence per the [Preferred Drug Guidelines OR](#)
2. When health plan Exchange coverage provisions-including any applicable PDLs (Preferred Drug Lists)-conflict with the coverage provisions in this drug policy, health plan Exchange coverage provisions take precedence per the [Preferred Drug Guidelines OR](#)

3. For Health Plans that utilize NCH UM Oncology Clinical Policies as the initial clinical criteria, the [Preferred Drug Guidelines](#) shall follow [NCH L1 Pathways](#) when applicable, otherwise shall follow NCH drug policies **AND**
4. Continuation requests of previously approved, non-preferred medication are not subject to this provision **AND**
5. When applicable, generic alternatives are preferred over brand-name drugs.

B. Polycythemia Vera

1. Besremi (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft) may be used as monotherapy in members with a confirmed diagnosis of polycythemia vera following a lack of response to hydroxyurea (e.g., response is defined as a normalization of white blood cell count $\leq 10,000/\text{microL}$, platelets $\leq 400,000/\text{microL}$, hematocrit < 45 without phlebotomy). Besremi (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft) may be considered if the member has documented failure, contraindications, or intolerance to Hydrea (hydroxyurea).

III. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- A. Disease progression while taking Besremi (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft) or another Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor [e.g., Jakafi (ruxolitinib)] .
- B. Concurrent use with other cytoreductive agents (e.g., hydroxyurea).
- C. Dosing exceeds single dose limit of Besremi (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft) 500 mcg.
- D. Investigational use of Besremi (ropeginterferon alfa-2b-nijft) with an off-label indication that is not sufficient in evidence or is not generally accepted by the medical community. Sufficient evidence that is not supported by CMS recognized compendia or acceptable peer reviewed literature is defined as any of the following:
 1. Whether the clinical characteristics of the patient and the cancer are adequately represented in the published evidence.
 2. Whether the administered chemotherapy/biologic therapy/immune therapy/targeted therapy/other oncologic therapy regimen is adequately represented in the published evidence.
 3. Whether the reported study outcomes represent clinically meaningful outcomes experienced by patients. Generally, the definition of Clinically Meaningful outcomes are those recommended by ASCO, e.g., Hazard Ratio of < 0.80 and the recommended survival benefit for OS and PFS should be at least 3 months.
 4. Whether the experimental design, in light of the drugs and conditions under investigation, is appropriate to address the investigative question. (For example, in some clinical studies, it may be unnecessary or not feasible to use randomization, double blind trials, placebos, or crossover).
 5. That non-randomized clinical trials with a significant number of subjects may be a basis for supportive clinical evidence for determining accepted uses of drugs.
 6. That case reports are generally considered uncontrolled and anecdotal information and do not provide adequate supportive clinical evidence for determining accepted uses of drugs.
 7. That abstracts (including meeting abstracts) without the full article from the approved peer-reviewed journals lack supporting clinical evidence for determining accepted uses of drugs.

IV. MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

- A. Please refer to the FDA label/package insert for details regarding these topics.

V. APPROVAL AUTHORITY

- A. Review – Utilization Management Department
- B. Final Approval – Utilization Management Committee

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- A. None

VII. REFERENCES

- A. Gisslinger H et al. long term use of ropeginterferon alpha 2-b in polycythemia vera: 5 year results from a randomized controlled study and its extension. 2020;136(Suppl):33. DOI:10.1182/blood-2020-136973.
- B. Gisslinger H, et al. Ropoginterferon alfa-2b, a novel IFN α -2b, induces high response rates with low toxicity in patients with polycythemia vera. Blood. 2015;126(15):1762-1769.
- C. Besremi prescribing information. PharmaEssentia USA Corporation Burlington, MA 2021.
- D. Clinical Pharmacology Elsevier Gold Standard 2021.
- E. Micromedex® Healthcare Series: Thomson Micromedex, Greenwood Village, CO 2021.
- F. National Comprehensive Cancer Network. Cancer Guidelines and Drugs and Biologics Compendium 2021.
- G. AHFS Drug Information. American Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists or Wolters Kluwer Lexi-Drugs Bethesda, MD 2021.
- H. Ellis LM, et al. American Society of Clinical Oncology perspective: Raising the bar for clinical trials by defining clinically meaningful outcomes. J Clin Oncol. 2014 Apr 20;32(12):1277-80.
- I. Medicare Benefit Policy Manual Chapter 15 Covered Medical and Other Health Services: <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/bp102c15.pdf>.