

MINUTES

METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEE BENEFIT BOARD

MEDICAL & LIFE COMMITTEE

May 29, 2024

The Metropolitan Employee Benefit Board's Medical & Life Committee met on Thursday, May 29, 2024, in the Sonny West Conference Room, Howard Office Building, 700 President Ronald Reagan Way, Nashville, TN at approximately 9:31 a.m.

Committee Members present: *Vice-Chair Gilbert Gonzales: Members: Christine Bradley, B.R. Hall, Sr., and Edna J. Jones. Alternate(s): Shannon Hall.

Chair Harold W. Finch, II and member G. Thomas Curtis were unable to be present.

Others present: Christina Hickey, Metro Human Resources and Nicki Eke and Courtney Mohan, Metro Legal Department.

Christina Hickey called the meeting to order and stated that she would be helping the Vice-Chair conduct the meeting. She also noted that two appellants will be attending the meeting virtually and additional medical information has been presented for item 4.

The Human Resources staff submitted the following for the Committee's consideration and appropriate action:

1. Public Comment Period

A maximum of five (5) persons who write their names on the sign-up sheet provided at the meeting will be allowed to comment on matters that are germane to items on the Agenda. Comments are limited to a maximum of two (2) minutes per person. To provide comment, you must sign up prior to the beginning of the meeting.

There were no public comments.

2. Self-insured Cigna PPO plan appeal - Dependent of employee from the Fire Department.

Christina Hickey reported to the Committee that a member participating in the self-insured Cigna plan is appealing the denial of coverage for Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code J1557 Gammplex 20 Gram/200 MI Vial coverage for their dependent. She stated this medication is used for the treatment of PANDAS and Cigna's coverage policy does not cover IVIG for this condition for this dependent as it is deemed experimental/investigational.

Paul Huffman, Cigna, was present. He stated that the service and procedure requested is considered investigational/experimental and undetermined and it is denied for that reason.

*Denotes the arrival of Gilbert Gonzales.

The member's mother attended the meeting virtually. She addressed the Committee regarding the request, the dependents condition, and misdiagnoses.

Dr. Kenton Dodd gave an overview of PANDAS and treatment options.

There was some discussion regarding the medical record and the lack of information from the treatment provider that outlines why this treatment is necessary and what other treatments have been done.

After some discussion of obtaining the necessary information from the treating physician as to why this treatment is necessary, B.R. Hall moved to cover the treatment. Gilbert Gonzales seconded.

A vote was taken on the motion to cover the treatment and resulted in a tie vote with B.R. Hall and Gilbert Gonzales in favor and Christine Bradley and Edna Jones opposed and Shannon Hall abstaining.

It was noted that this item will go to the Board without a recommendation from the Committee.

3. Self-insured Cigna PPO plan appeal - Employee from State Trial Courts.

Christina Hickey reported to the Committee that a member participating in the self-insured Cigna PPO plan is appealing the denial of coverage for GLP-1 medications for the treatment of PCOS. She stated that Cigna does not cover these medications as Metro's plan document specifically excludes drugs intended for weight loss and the plan does not include this drug class as a buy up. She stated it is a benefit exclusion and prior authorization is not accepted and these medications will not be covered under the pharmacy plan.

Paul Huffman, Cigna, was present. He stated that this was denied as there is no indication the member has type 2 diabetes and the medication is only approved for diabetes.

The member was present and addressed the Committee regarding the request, her conditions, medications she has taken in the past, family history of diabetes and how this would help with treatment of her condition.

There was some discussion of the different GLP-1 medications, what conditions they cover, side effects, and conditions that are being studied by the FDA.

There was also some discussion of a class action lawsuit related to this drug class.

After some discussion of FDA approval, risk factors and taking a medication to prevent a condition in the future, Shannon Hall moved to uphold the denial in this particular case at this time. B.R. Hall seconded and the Committee approved without objection.

4. Self-insured Cigna HRA plan appeal - Dependent of employee from Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, (MNPd).

Christina Hickey reported to the Committee that a member participating in the self-insured Cigna HRA plan is appealing the denial of coverage for GLP-1 medications. She stated Cigna does not cover these medications as Metro's plan document specifically excludes drugs intended for weight loss does not include this drug class as a buy up. She stated it is a benefit exclusion and prior authorization is not accepted and these medications will not be covered under the pharmacy plan.

The member attended the meeting virtually.

Paul Huffman, Cigna, was present. He stated that this was denied as there was no indication that the member has type 2 diabetes and this medication is not covered for any other indication as it is considered experimental/investigational or unproven for other indications.

The member addressed the Committee regarding the request for the medication, her conditions, treatments, current medications and taking this medication will help against the spread of one of her conditions.

There was some discussion of the dependent's conditions and how some of them relate to one another.

Christine Bradley moved to overturn the denial based on the extenuating circumstances of this particular case. Gilbert Gonzales seconded, and the Board approved with Edna Jones and B.R. Hall abstaining.

5. Self-insured Cigna HRA plan appeal - Dependent of employee from the Sheriff's Office.

Christina Hickey reported to the Committee that a dependent of a Sheriff's Office employee, participating in the self-insured Cigna HRA plan was denied coverage of the insertion of peripheral nerve neurostimulator electrode through skin (procedure code 64555). She stated this was denied as the Cigna medical policy states that this procedure is considered experimental, investigational, and not medically necessary. She stated the dependent and as the dependent's authorized representative, SPR Therapeutics, are appealing the Cigna HRA plan denial and have supplied documentation on their appeal.

The member was not present.

Paul Huffman, Cigna, was present. He stated that this is still considered experimental/investigational or unproven.

5. Self-insured Cigna HRA plan appeal - Dependent of employee from the Sheriff's Office. (continued)

After some discussion of the review of this procedure and the members current treatments, Shannon Hall moved to uphold the denial. Edna Jones seconded, and the Committee approved with Gilbert Gonzales abstaining.

With nothing further presented, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

**Shannon B. Hall, Director
Human Resources**

**Gilbert Gonzales, Vice-Chair
Medical & Life Committee**