**Drug/Drug Class:** Verquvo Clinical Edit  
**First Implementation Date:** October 21, 2021  
**Revised Date:** N/A  
**Prepared for:** MO HealthNet  
**Prepared by:** MO HealthNet/Conduent  
**Criteria Status:** ☒ New Criteria

## Executive Summary

**Purpose:** Ensure appropriate utilization and control of Verquvo® (vericiguat)

**Why Issue Selected:** Verquvo®, FDA approved in January 2021, is a stimulator of soluble guanylate cyclase (sGC), an enzyme in the nitric oxide (NO) signaling pathway. It is indicated to reduce the risk of cardiovascular death and heart failure (HF) hospitalization following a hospitalization for HF or need for outpatient IV diuretics in adults with symptomatic chronic HF and an ejection fraction less than 45%. When NO binds to sGC, the enzyme catalyzes the synthesis of intracellular cyclic guanosine monophosphate (cGMP), a second messenger that plays a role in the regulation of vascular tone, cardiac contractility, and cardiac remodeling. HF is associated with impaired synthesis of NO and decreased activity of sGC, which may contribute to myocardial and vascular dysfunction. By directly stimulating sGC, independently of and synergistically with NO, Verquvo augments the levels of intracellular cGMP, leading to smooth muscle relaxation and vasodilation. Current guideline-directed first line therapy for patients with HF with reduced ejection fraction consists of beta-blockers in combination with either an angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor (ACEI), an angiotensin receptor blocker (ARB), or Entresto® (sacubitril/valsartan). Due to the specific approved indication, MO HealthNet will impose clinical criteria to ensure appropriate utilization of Verquvo.

<table>
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<th>Drug</th>
<th>Claims</th>
<th>Cost per tablet</th>
<th>Cost per month</th>
<th>Cost per year</th>
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<tr>
<td>VERQUVO 2.5 MG TABLET</td>
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**Type of Criteria:**  
- ☐ Increased risk of ADE  
- ☒ Appropriate Indications  
- ☐ Preferred Drug List  
- ☐ Clinical Edit  

**Data Sources:**  
- ☐ Only Administrative Databases  
- ☒ Databases + Prescriber-Supplied
Setting & Population

• Drug class for review: Verquvo® (vericiguat)
• Age range: All appropriate MO HealthNet participants aged 18 years or older

Approval Criteria

• Documented history of previous therapy with Verquvo in the past 60 days OR
• Prescribed by or in consultation with a cardiologist or other appropriate specialist in the treated disease state AND
• Participant is aged 18 years or older AND
• Documented diagnosis of heart failure, NYHA class II – IV AND
• Documented ejection fraction < 45% AND
• Documentation of worsening heart failure, defined as one of the following:
  o History of previous hospitalization for heart failure in the past 6 months OR
  o History of outpatient intravenous diuretic therapy for treatment of heart failure (without hospitalization) in the past 3 months AND
• Documented therapy with Entresto for 60 of the past 90 days

Denial Criteria

• Therapy will be denied if all approval criteria are not met
• Participant is currently pregnant
• Claim exceeds 1 tablet per day

Required Documentation

Laboratory Results: X  Progress Notes:
MedWatch Form: Other: X

Disposition of Edit

Denial: Exception code “0682” (Clinical Edit)
Rule Type: CE

Default Approval Period

1 year

References

• VERQUVO (vericiguat) [Package Insert]. White House Station, NJ Merck & Co, June 2021.