AETNA BETTER HEALTH®
Coverage Policy/Guideline

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Effective Date:	5/1/2025	Last Review Date:	4/2025

Applies to:	☐Illinois	☐Florida	☒Florida Kids
	☐New Jersey	☒Maryland	☐Michigan
	☒Pennsylvania Kids	☐Virginia	☒Kentucky PRMD

Intent:

The intent of this policy/guideline is to provide information to the prescribing practitioner outlining the coverage criteria for Cimzia under the patient's prescription drug benefit.

Description:

The indications below including FDA-approved indications and compendial uses are considered a covered benefit provided that all the approval criteria are met, and the member has no exclusions to the prescribed therapy.

FDA-Approved Indications

A. Reducing signs and symptoms of Crohn's disease and maintaining clinical response in adult patients with moderately to severely active disease who have had an inadequate response to conventional therapy.
B. Treatment of adults with moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis.
C. Treatment of active polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis (pJIA) in patients 2 years of age and older.
D. Treatment of adult patients with active psoriatic arthritis.
E. Treatment of adults with active ankylosing spondylitis.
F. Treatment of adults with active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis with objective signs of inflammation.
G. Treatment of adults with moderate-to-severe plaque psoriasis who are candidates for systemic therapy or phototherapy.

Compendial Use

Immune checkpoint inhibitor-related toxicity - inflammatory arthritis

All other indications are considered experimental/investigational and not medically necessary.

Applicable Drug List:

Non-Preferred: Cimzia

Policy/Guideline:

Documentation for all indications:
The patient is unable to take a preferred adalimumab product AND Enbrel and ONE additional preferred product (a preferred ustekinumab product, Kevzara, Otezla or Rinvoq),

where indicated, for the given diagnosis due to a trial and inadequate treatment response or intolerance, or a contraindication. Documentation is required for approval.

Documentation:
Submission of the following information is necessary to initiate the prior authorization review:

A. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA)
   1. Initial requests:
      a. Chart notes, medical record documentation, or claims history supporting previous medications tried (if applicable), including response to therapy. If therapy is not advisable, documentation of clinical reason to avoid therapy.
      b. Laboratory results, chart notes, or medical record documentation of biomarker testing (i.e., rheumatoid factor [RF], anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide [anti-CCP], and C-reactive protein [CRP] and/or erythrocyte sedimentation rate [ESR]) (if applicable).
   2. Continuation requests:
      a. Chart notes or medical record documentation supporting positive clinical response.

B. Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (pJIA)
   1. Initial requests:
      a. Chart notes, medical record documentation, or claims history supporting previous medications tried (if applicable), including response to therapy.
   2. Continuation requests:
      a. Chart notes or medical record documentation supporting positive clinical response.

C. Ankylosing spondylitis (AS), non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA), psoriatic arthritis (PsA) and Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor-Related Toxicity
   1. Initial requests:
      a. Chart notes, medical record documentation, or claims history supporting previous medications tried (if applicable), including response to therapy. If therapy is not advisable, documentation of clinical reason to avoid therapy.
   2. Continuation requests:
      a. Chart notes or medical record documentation supporting positive clinical response.

D. Crohn's disease (CD)
Continuation requests: Chart notes or medical record documentation supporting positive clinical response to therapy or remission.

E. Plaque psoriasis (PsO)
1. Initial requests:
    a. Chart notes or medical record documentation of affected area(s) and body surface area (BSA) affected (if applicable).
    b. Chart notes, medical record documentation, or claims history supporting previous medications tried (if applicable), including response to therapy. If therapy is not advisable, documentation of clinical reason to avoid therapy.
2. Continuation requests:
    a. Chart notes or medical record documentation of decreased body surface area (BSA) affected and/or improvement in signs and symptoms.

Prescriber Specialty:
This medication must be prescribed by or in consultation with one of the following:
A. Rheumatoid arthritis, polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, or non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis: rheumatologist
B. Psoriatic arthritis: rheumatologist or dermatologist
C. Crohn's disease: gastroenterologist
D. Plaque psoriasis: dermatologist
E. Immune checkpoint inhibitor-related toxicity: oncologist, hematologist, or rheumatologist

Criteria for Initial Approval:
A. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA)
Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members who have previously received a biologic or targeted synthetic drug indicated for moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis.

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members for treatment of moderately to severely active RA when both of the following criteria are met:

A. Member meets either of the following criteria:
1. Member has been tested for either of the following biomarkers and the test was positive:
    i. Rheumatoid Factor (RF)

ii. Anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide (anti-CCP)

2. Member has been tested for ALL of the following biomarkers:
   i. RF
   ii. Anti-CCP
   iii. C-reactive protein (CRP) and/or erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR)

B. Member meets either of the following criteria:
1. Member has had an inadequate response to at least a 3-month trial of methotrexate despite adequate dosing (i.e., titrated to at least 15 mg/week).
2. Member has an intolerance or contraindication to methotrexate (see Appendix A)

B. Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (pJIA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for members 2 years of age or older who have previously received a biologic or targeted synthetic drug indicated for moderately to severely active polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis.

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for members 2 years of age or older for treatment of moderately to severely active polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis when any of the following criteria is met:

1. Member has had an inadequate response to methotrexate or another conventional synthetic drug (e.g., leflunomide, sulfasalazine, hydroxychloroquine) administered at an adequate dose and duration.
2. Member has had an inadequate response to a trial of scheduled non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and/or intra-articular glucocorticoids (e.g., triamcinolone hexacetonide) and one of the following risk factors for poor outcome:
   a. Involvement of ankle, wrist, hip, sacroiliac joint, and/or temporomandibular joint (TMJ)
   b. Presence of erosive disease or enthesitis
   c. Delay in diagnosis
   d. Elevated levels of inflammation markers
   e. Symmetric disease
3. Member has risk factors for disease severity and potentially a more refractory disease course (see Appendix B) and meets one of the following:
   a. High-risk joints are involved (e.g., cervical spine, wrist, or hip)

b. High disease activity
c. Is judged to be at high risk for disabling joint disease

C. Psoriatic arthritis (PsA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members who have previously received a biologic or targeted synthetic drug indicated for active psoriatic arthritis.

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members for treatment of active psoriatic arthritis when either of the following criteria is met:

1. Member has mild to moderate disease and meets one of the following criteria:
   a. Member has had an inadequate response to methotrexate, leflunomide, or another conventional synthetic drug (e.g., sulfasalazine) administered at an adequate dose and duration.
   b. Member has an intolerance or contraindication to methotrexate or leflunomide (see Appendix A), or another conventional synthetic drug (e.g., sulfasalazine).
   c. Member has enthesitis or predominantly axial disease.
2. Member has severe disease.

D. Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members who have previously received a biologic or targeted synthetic drug indicated for active ankylosing spondylitis or active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis.

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members for treatment of active ankylosing spondylitis or active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis when either of the following criteria is met:

1. Member has had an inadequate response to at least two non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
2. Member has an intolerance or contraindication to two or more NSAIDs.

E. Crohn's disease (CD)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for treatment of moderately to severely active Crohn's disease.

F. Plaque psoriasis (PsO)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members who have previously received a biologic or targeted synthetic drug (e.g., Sotyktu, Otezla) indicated for treatment of moderate to severe plaque psoriasis.

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for adult members for treatment of moderate to severe plaque psoriasis when any of the following criteria is met:

1. Crucial body areas (e.g., hands, feet, face, neck, scalp, genitals/groin, intertriginous areas) are affected.
2. At least 10% of body surface area (BSA) is affected.
3. At least 3% of body surface area (BSA) is affected and the member meets either of the following criteria:
    a. Member has had an inadequate response or intolerance to either phototherapy (e.g., UVB, PUVA) or pharmacologic treatment with methotrexate, cyclosporine, or acitretin.

    Member has a clinical reason to avoid pharmacologic treatment with methotrexate, cyclosporine, and acitretin (see Appendix A).

G. Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor-Related Toxicity

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for treatment of immune checkpoint inhibitor-related toxicity when the member has moderate or severe immunotherapy-related inflammatory arthritis and meets either of the following:

1. Member has had an inadequate response to corticosteroids or a conventional synthetic drug (e.g., methotrexate, sulfasalazine, leflunomide, hydroxychloroquine).
2. Member has an intolerance or contraindication to corticosteroids and a conventional synthetic drug (e.g., methotrexate, sulfasalazine, leflunomide, hydroxychloroquine).

Continuation of Therapy:

A. Rheumatoid arthritis (RA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all adult members (including new members) who are using the requested medication for moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis and who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by disease activity improvement of at least 20% from baseline in tender joint count, swollen joint count, pain, or disability.

B. Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (pJIA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all members 2 years of age or older (including new members) who are using the requested medication for moderately to severely active polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis and who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by low disease activity or improvement in signs and symptoms of the condition when there is improvement in any of the following from baseline:

1. Number of joints with active arthritis (e.g., swelling, pain, limitation of motion)
2. Number of joints with limitation of movement
3. Functional ability

C. Psoriatic arthritis (PsA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all adult members (including new members) who are using the requested medication for psoriatic arthritis and who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by low disease activity or improvement in signs and symptoms of the condition when there is improvement in any of the following from baseline:

1. Number of swollen joints
2. Number of tender joints
3. Dactylitis
4. Enthesitis
5. Axial disease
6. Skin and/or nail involvement
7. Functional status
8. C-reactive protein (CRP)

D. Ankylosing spondylitis (AS) and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all adult members (including new members) who are using the requested medication for ankylosing spondylitis or non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis and who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by low disease activity or improvement in signs and symptoms of the condition when there is improvement in any of the following from baseline:

1. Functional status
2. Total spinal pain
3. Inflammation (e.g., morning stiffness)
4. Swollen joints

5. Tender joints
6. C-reactive protein (CRP)

E. Crohn's disease (CD)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all (including new members) who are using the requested medication for moderately to severely active Crohn's disease and who achieve or maintain remission.

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all members (including new members) who are using the requested medication for moderately to severely active Crohn's disease and who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by low disease activity or improvement in signs and symptoms of the condition when there is improvement in any of the following from baseline:

1. Abdominal pain or tenderness
2. Diarrhea
3. Body weight
4. Abdominal mass
5. Hematocrit
6. Appearance of the mucosa on endoscopy, computed tomography enterography (CTE), magnetic resonance enterography (MRE), or intestinal ultrasound
7. Improvement on a disease activity scoring tool (e.g., Crohn's Disease Activity Index [CDAI] score)

E. Plaque psoriasis (PsO)

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all adult members (including new members) who are using the requested medication for moderate to severe plaque psoriasis and who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by low disease activity or improvement in signs and symptoms of the condition when either of the following is met:

1. Reduction in body surface area (BSA) affected from baseline
2. Improvement in signs and symptoms from baseline (e.g., itching, redness, flaking, scaling, burning, cracking, pain)

F. Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor-Related Toxicity

Authorization of 12 months may be granted for all members (including new members) who are using the requested medication for immunotherapy-related inflammatory arthritis and

who achieve or maintain a positive clinical response as evidenced by low disease activity or improvement in signs and symptoms of the condition.

Other Criteria:
For all indications: Member has had a documented negative tuberculosis (TB) test (which can include a tuberculosis skin test [TST] or an interferon-release assay [IGRA]) within 12 months of initiating therapy for persons who are naïve to biologic drugs or targeted synthetic drugs associated with an increased risk of TB.

If the screening testing for TB is positive, there must be further testing to confirm there is no active disease (e.g., chest x-ray). Do not administer the requested medication to members with active TB infection. If there is latent disease, TB treatment must be started before initiation of the requested medication.

For all indications: Member cannot use the requested medication concomitantly with any other biologic drug or targeted synthetic drug for the same indication.

Dosage and Administration:
Approvals may be subject to dosing limits in accordance with FDA-approved labeling, accepted compendia, and/or evidence-based practice guidelines.

Appendix:
Appendix A: Examples of Clinical Reasons to Avoid Pharmacologic Treatment with Methotrexate, Cyclosporine, Acitretin, or Leflunomide

- Clinical diagnosis of alcohol use disorder, alcoholic liver disease, or other chronic liver disease
- Drug interaction
- Risk of treatment-related toxicity
- Pregnancy or currently planning pregnancy
- Breastfeeding
- Significant comorbidity prohibits use of systemic agents (e.g., liver or kidney disease, blood dyscrasias, uncontrolled hypertension)
- Hypersensitivity
- History of intolerance or adverse event

Appendix B: Risk factors for polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis

- Positive rheumatoid factor
- Positive anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide antibodies
- Pre-existing joint damage

Approval Duration and Quantity Restrictions:

Approval:
Initial Approval: 12 months
Renewal Approval: 12 months

Quantity Level Limit:

Medication	Standard Limit	Exception Limit*	FDA-recommended dosing
Cimzia starter kit (contains six 200 mg per 1 mL syringes)	6 syringes (3 sets of 2 syringes) per 28 days	Not applicable	**RA/PsA/AS/nr-axSpA** • Loading doses: 400 mg (two 200 mg injections) at weeks 0, 2, 4 • Maintenance dose: 200 mg every other week or 400 mg every 4 weeks **Crohn's disease** • Loading doses: 400 mg (two 200 mg injections) at weeks 0, 2, 4 • Maintenance dose: 400 mg every 4 weeks based on clinical response **Plaque psoriasis** • 400 mg (two 200 mg injections) every other week • For some patients with body weight ≤ 90 kg: 400 mg at weeks 0, 2, 4 followed by 200 mg every other week
Cimzia 200 mg per 1 mL prefilled syringe kit for subcutaneous injection	2 kits (4 syringes) per 28 days	Not applicable	
Cimzia kit (contains two 200 mg vials)	2 kits (4 vials) per 28 days	3 kits (6 vials) per 28 days	

Medication	Standard Limit	Exception Limit*	FDA-recommended dosing

*Coverage up to the exception limits may be provided with prior authorization

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