



**JAMES L. MADARA, MD**  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CEO

ama-assn.org  
t (312) 464-5000

December 17, 2018

Sumit Dutta, MD, MBA  
Senior Vice President and  
Chief Medical Officer  
OptumRx  
2300 Main Street  
Irvine, CA 92614

Dear Dr. Dutta:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I request your assistance in improving prescription drug prior authorization (PA) programs, including increased transparency of current processes. Physicians have significant concerns regarding the impact of PA and other utilization management requirements on the delivery of timely, quality treatment and the diversion of valuable resources away from direct patient care.

At its 2018 Annual Meeting, the AMA's House of Delegates established new policy directing our organization to gather data regarding pharmacy benefit managers' PA programs. Accordingly, we request a list of the 25 prescription medications for which OptumRx receives the highest volume of PA requests and the corresponding PA approval rate for each medication, including approvals following appealed decisions. These valuable data will help physicians better understand prescription drug utilization management programs and increase transparency of PA processes.

Additionally, we urge you to join important efforts already underway to achieve meaningful reforms in PA programs. In January 2018, the AMA, American Hospital Association, America's Health Insurance Plans, American Pharmacists Association, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, and Medical Group Management Association released the enclosed Consensus Statement on Improving the Prior Authorization Process, which reflects our organizations' shared commitment to reducing PA burdens and enhancing patient-centered care. This document outlines key PA reforms across five broad categories: (1) selective application of PA requirements, (2) regular review and adjustment of drugs/services requiring PA, (3) improved transparency and communication regarding PA, (4) protections for continuity of patient care, and (5) automation to enhance transparency and efficiency. This cross-stakeholder statement highlights the industry-wide recognition of the critical need for PA program improvements, as well as an agreement between health care professionals and health plans to collaborate on PA reform efforts. We encourage OptumRx to incorporate the concepts detailed in the consensus statement in its PA program.

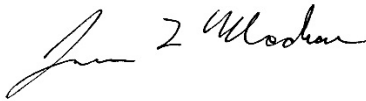
Sumit Dutta, MD, MBA

December 17, 2018

Page 2

The AMA is committed to working with health plans and benefit managers to improve PA processes to ensure optimal patient care and reduce administrative burdens, and we urge OptumRx to join us in these efforts. We look forward to receiving the requested PA program data from you and hope that this can begin a larger conversation about how our organizations can collaborate on this important issue. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss PA reform, please contact Heather McComas, Director of AMA Administrative Simplification Initiatives, at [heather.mccomas@ama-assn.org](mailto:heather.mccomas@ama-assn.org) or 312-464-4792.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim L Madara". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

James L. Madara, MD

Enclosure

cc: John Prince