



December 12, 2017

Anthem, Inc.  
120 Monument Circle  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Anthem:

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation Professional Advisory Board, we write to urge Anthem to revise its policy SURG.00026, which is impeding access to appropriate and lifesaving physician-directed epilepsy treatments. The current policy requires that a patient has either tried and failed treatment with Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS) or not be eligible for VNS before he/she can receive treatment with responsive neurostimulation delivered by the RNS System. This provision is not supported by scientific evidence. In addition, there is a significant difference in the functionality of the RNS System, which provides data on the patient's brain electrical activity and allows for personalized treatment, and the VNS, which provides no patient specific data or opportunity for personalization according to brain electrical activity. Requiring a VNS before the RNS System is unfounded and detrimental to individuals with well-localized medically refractory epilepsy. This policy puts individuals with severe and disabling seizures at risk and delays access to appropriate care and seizure control. The Epilepsy Foundation Professional Advisory Board respectfully requests that Anthem remove the criteria that a patient must try and fail on VNS prior to receiving coverage for RNS.

The Epilepsy Foundation is the leading national voluntary health organization that speaks on behalf of the at least 3.4 million Americans with epilepsy and seizures. We foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services.

Epilepsy is a medical condition that produces seizures affecting a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime. There is no "one size fits all" treatment for epilepsy, and about a third of people living with epilepsy suffer from uncontrolled or intractable seizures, with many more living with significant side-effects, despite available treatments. Uncontrolled seizures can lead to disability, injury, and even death.

For the majority of people living with epilepsy, medication is the treatment used for controlling and/or reducing seizures. However, when a medication does not lead to greater seizure control, or its side effects stand in the way of adherence and productivity, individuals need access to additional treatment options. Medication side effects can impact cognitive ability, mood, and memory leading to a reduction in productivity at home, work, and school. Individuals experiencing significant side effects often cannot stay on their medications, leading to an increase in seizures and related medical complications and costs.

Effectively treating epilepsy and seizures with minimal side effects requires meaningful access to the full range of therapies available, including the RNS System. This innovative device can help reduce the overall seizure burden with minimal to no side effects. There is a significant body of positive clinical evidence published in peer-reviewed medical journals, including data on long-term outcomes, demonstrating improved health outcomes. Restricting access to the RNS System removes an important treatment option for Anthem members with a complex and disabling condition seeking greater seizure control and improved quality of life.

The Epilepsy Foundation is committed to supporting policies that ensure meaningful access to proven therapies. We urge you to reconsider and change your policy to ensure access to appropriate physician-directed care that is supported by scientific evidence. Please do not hesitate to contact Angela Ostrom, Chief Legal Officer & Vice President Public Policy, at 301-918-3766 or [aostrom@efa.org](mailto:aostrom@efa.org) with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Christianne Heck, MD  
Chair, Professional Advisory Board  
Epilepsy Foundation



Philip M. Gattone, M.Ed.  
President and CEO  
Epilepsy Foundation