

Date March 17, 2020

To: Holly M. Long, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services

Re: Access to Nayzilam for patients of Nevada Medicaid

Dear Members of the Review Committee:

My name is Samir Bangalore and I am a neurologist who specializes in the care of persons with epilepsy. I am one of only two neurologists in Southern Nevada who is board certified in epilepsy. My practice is located at Sunrise Hospital where I established the state's first Epilepsy Center in 2007. I directed the first-ever epilepsy brain surgery in the state and continue to serve as medical director of the Epilepsy Center. I am also a member of the Advisory Board for the Epilepsy Foundation of Nevada, dutifully leading support groups and educational sessions for persons with epilepsy.

I am writing you today to urge you allow access to a new and very effective medication for persons with epilepsy named Nayzilam. This medication is unique in that it allows patients and caregivers the opportunity to administer a rescue drug for epilepsy, in the unfortunate circumstance that a cluster of seizures may occur. This is especially useful, since a rescue medication may prevent an unnecessary visit to the ER and, more importantly, may prevent life-threatening clusters of seizures and save lives.

Epilepsy is a condition that is unique among medical illnesses. It affects people at a very young age, but can also come on at any point during adulthood. If it is well controlled, persons with epilepsy can live independently, maintain gainful employment, attend school, drive a car, raise children and live a normal life. If seizures remain uncontrolled, however, epilepsy is a condition that can place all of those activities in jeopardy. It can render someone disabled and can even be life threatening. We know that patients with uncontrolled seizures are at high risk for severe injury or even sudden death. In the face of all these scary facts, the good news is that seizures are preventable and treatable. Proper treatment saves lives.

There are plenty of medications to treat epilepsy. One might ask why newer medications, some of which may be expensive, are chosen over older ones. Nayzilam is in a new class of medications that allow patients and caregivers to self-administer a critical drug in an urgent situation. Allowing access to this medication gives me the greatest ability to reach seizure freedom, ensure safety and enhance quality of life.

As someone who has dedicated their life to the treatment of persons with epilepsy, I request that you help me by giving my patients full access to life-saving medications. Restricting access

to medications will impact quality of life and lead to life-threatening complications. These complications cause undue burden not only on patients and their families, but also on the healthcare system as a whole by leading to unnecessary 911 calls, unnecessary trips to the emergency room, unnecessary lab testing, unnecessary radiology and seemingly endless health care bills.

As you can tell, I am passionate in providing the best possible care for my patients who suffer from seizures. To that end, I established the first nationally recognized Epilepsy Center in the state of Nevada, located at Sunrise Hospital. We are now able to serve the needs of a large community of persons with epilepsy right here in Las Vegas, rather than having to go out-of-state to seek out care. With the help of several others, I took part in organizing a local chapter of the Epilepsy Foundation. We host several educational and social programs for persons with epilepsy, including an upcoming Epilepsy Walk at Sunset Park. I do all of this so my patients can be happy and healthy, but I need your help. I can only do so much with educating my patients. Having access to a full complement of medications helps me serve the needs of patients whose very life depends on an optimized treatment plan.

In summary, my goal is to keep my patients happy and healthy in a cost effective manner while minimizing the need to go to the hospital to seek out medical care. Access to medications is probably the most important factor in allowing me to reach my goal and provide my patients with proper medical care.

I am happy to answer any questions and communicate my thoughts via phone or email. Please call my mobile phone at 702-672-7878 or email epilepsydoc@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Samir Bangalore, MD

Board Certified in Epilepsy by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology
Medical Director of the Epilepsy Center at Sunrise Hospital