Managing Prior Authorizations in Practice to Achieve Access and Clinical Goals: An Expert Clinical Review from the NLA

Care Team Member | Prior Authorization Workflow | Key Outputs per Step

Prescriber

STEP 1 - Prescriber

Determine medication, or class, based on diagnosis & guidelines. Ensure thorough documentation.

Select medication class (e.g. statin, GLP-1, PCSK9 targeted therapy)

Clinical Pharmacist / Specialty Pharmacy

STEP 2 - Clinical Pharmacist / Specialty Pharmacy

Select agent within class, if needed: patient factors, formulary - preferred, adverse - effect profile. Document plan & initiation.

Specific agent + dose + titration + monitoring plan

Formulary alignment documented

Medication Access Coordinator (MAC)

STEP 3A - Benefits Investigation

Verify insurance coverage, formulary tier, step-therapy requirements, eligibility.

PA decision (approved / denied)

Access support

First fill coordinated

Does the patient have insurance?

No

Patient Assistance Program Enrollment

Manufacturer-sponsored free drug

Denied

Yes

STEP 3B - Prior Authorization

Gather supporting documents. Submit PA to payer. Track status; communicate with payer & pharmacy.

PA decision?

Denied

STEP 3D - Appeal

Prepare clinical rationale, peer-to-peer review, confirm with clinical pharmacist or provider. Resubmit to payer.

Approved

Approved

Denied

Change In Therapy

Return to prescriber & pharmacist to select an alternative agent or medication class

STEP 3C - Assess Access Barriers

Evaluate cost, specialty pharmacy access, patient affordability. Identify support programs needed before dispensing.

Copay Card

Manufacturer co-pay assistance program for commercially insured.

Foundation Assistance

Charitable funding for uninsured or underinsured patients.

Pharmacist / Nurse

STEP 4 - Pharmacist / Nurse

Patient education: indication, device training, storage, side effects, missed dose management. Coordinate first fill, start date, follow-up call/labs. Document counseling.

Document counseling

Therapy started

Schedule follow-up

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