

## Clinical Policy: Donanemab-azbt (Kisunla)

Reference Number: PA.CP.PHAR.594

Effective Date: 11/2024

Last Review Date: 04/2026

### Description

Donanemab-azbt (Kisunla™) is a monoclonal antibody targeting amyloid beta.

### FDA Approved Indication(s)

Kisunla is indicated for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease (AD). Treatment with Kisunla should be initiated in patients with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or mild dementia stage of disease, the population in which treatment was initiated in the clinical trials.

### Policy/Criteria

*Provider must submit documentation (such as office chart notes, lab results or other clinical information) supporting that member has met all approval criteria.*

It is the policy of PA Health & Wellness® that Kisunla is **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

#### I. Initial Approval Criteria

##### A. Alzheimer's Disease (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of MCI due to AD or mild AD dementia (see *Appendix E*);
2. Prescribed by or in consultation with a geriatrician or neurologist;
3. Documentation of the presence of beta-amyloid plaques as verified by one of the following (a or b):
  - a. Positron emission tomography scan;
  - b. Cerebrospinal fluid testing;
4. Documentation of one of the following baseline cognitive tests (a or b; see *Appendix D*):
  - a. Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) score of 20-28;
  - b. Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) score  $\geq 16$ ;
5. Documentation of one of the following baseline functional tests and the resulting score (a, b, or c):
  - a. Functional Assessment Questionnaire (FAQ) score  $\leq 9$ ;
  - b. Functional Assessment Staging Test (FAST) score of 3-4;
  - c. Clinical Dementia Rating-Sum of Boxes (CDR-SB) of 0.5-9;
6. Documentation of recent (within the last year) brain magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) demonstrating all of the following (a-e):
  - a. Absence of amyloid-related imaging abnormalities-edema (ARIA-E);
  - b.  $\leq 4$  cerebral microhemorrhages;
  - c.  $\leq 1$  area of superficial siderosis;
  - d. Absence of any macrohemorrhage;
  - e. Absence of any severe white matter disease;
7. Member has no history of transient ischemic attacks (TIA), stroke, or seizures within the past 12 months;

8. Member is not currently taking concomitant anticoagulant or antiplatelet therapy;
9. Prescriber attestation that the prescriber has discussed with the member the potentially increased risk of amyloid-related imaging abnormalities (ARIA) in those who are ApoE4 genetic homozygotes;
10. Kisunla is not prescribed concurrently with Leqembi or Leqembi Iqlik;
11. Dose does not exceed 1,400 mg every 4 weeks.

**Approval duration: 6 months**

**B. Other diagnoses/indications**

1. Refer to the off-label use policy if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized): PA.CP.PMN.53

**II. Continued Therapy**

**A. Alzheimer's Disease (must meet all):**

1. Currently receiving medication via PA Health & Wellness benefit and documentation supports positive response to therapy or the Continuity of Care policy (PA.PHARM.01) applies;
2. Member is responding positively to therapy as evidenced by slowed decline in cognition;
3. Documentation of recent (within the last month) results of one of the following baseline cognitive tests (a or b; *see Appendix D*):
  - a. MMSE score of 20-28;
  - b. MoCA score  $\geq$  16;
4. Documentation of recent (within the last month) results of one of the following baseline functional tests and the resulting score (a, b, or c):
  - a. FAQ score  $\leq$  9;
  - b. FAST score of 3-4;
  - c. CDR-SB of 0.5-9;
5. Member is not currently taking concomitant anticoagulant or antiplatelet therapy;
6. Kisunla is not prescribed concurrently with Leqembi or Leqembi Iqlik;
7. If request is for a dose increase, new dose does not exceed 1,400 mg every 4 weeks.

**Approval duration: 12 months**

**B. Other diagnoses/indications (must meet 1 or 2):**

1. Currently receiving medication via PA Health & Wellness benefit and documentation supports positive response to therapy or the Continuity of Care policy (PA.PHARM.01) applies.

**Approval duration: Duration of request or 12 months (whichever is less); or**

2. Refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business if diagnosis is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized): PA.CP.PMN.53

**III. Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized:**

- A. Non-FDA approved indications, which are not addressed in this policy, unless there is sufficient documentation of efficacy and safety according to the off label use policies – PA.CP.PMN.53

#### IV. Appendices/General Information

##### *Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key*

AD: Alzheimer's disease

ARIA-E: amyloid-related imaging abnormalities-edema

ARIA-H: amyloid-related imaging abnormalities-hemosiderin deposition

CDR-SB: Clinical Dementia Rating-Sum of Boxes

CMS: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

DLB: dementia with Lewy bodies

FAQ: Functional Assessment Questionnaire

FAST: Functional Assessment Staging Test

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

FLAIR: fluid attenuation inversion recovery

FTD: frontotemporal dementia

IADL: instrumental activity of daily living

MCI: mild cognitive impairment

MMSE: Mini-Mental State Examination

MoCA: Montreal Cognitive Assessment

MRI: magnetic resonance imaging

PPA: primary progressive aphasia

TIA: transient ischemic attack

##### *Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives*

Not applicable

##### *Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings*

- Contraindication(s): serious hypersensitivity to donanemab-azbt or to any of the excipients of Kisunla
- Boxed warning(s): increased risk of ARIA

##### *Appendix D: Dementia Rating Scales*

- MoCA is a highly sensitive tool for early detection of MCI and has been widely adopted in clinical settings. The maximum score is 30 points. The following ranges may be used to grade severity: 18-25 = mild cognitive impairment, 10-17 = moderate cognitive impairment and < 10 = severe cognitive impairment. However, research for these severity ranges has not been established yet. The average MoCA score for MCI is 22 (range 19-25) and the average MoCA score for Mild AD is 16 (range 11-21).
- MMSE is a series of questions asked by a health professional designed to test a range of everyday mental skills. The maximum score is 30 points where the following levels of dementia are indicated with a score of:
  - 25 to 30 suggests normal cognition,
  - 21 to 24 suggests mild dementia,
  - 13 to 20 suggests moderate dementia, and
  - less than 12 indicates severe dementia.
  - On average, the MMSE score of a person with Alzheimer's declines about two to four points each year.
- The FAQ measures instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), such as preparing balanced meals and managing personal finances. Since functional changes are noted earlier in the dementia process with IADLs that require a higher cognitive ability compared to basic activities of daily living, this tool is useful to monitor these functional changes over time. The score range is 0-30. A cut-point of 9 (dependent in 3 or more

activities) is recommended to indicate impaired function and possible cognitive impairment.

- FAST is a measure commonly used to assess functional status in patients with dementia. It provides a comprehensive evaluation of functional ability and the potential for a functional decline over time, including physical functional abilities (dressing and grooming), functional language abilities (memory and recognition), and functional activities such as mobility or self-feeding. The FAST score ranges from 1 to 7, categorizing the stages of AD into one of the below:
  - 1: normal aging
  - 2: possible mild cognitive impairment
  - 3: mild cognitive impairment
  - 4: mild dementia
  - 5: moderate dementia
  - 6: moderately severe dementia
  - 7: severe dementia
- CDR-SB assessment is a 5-point scale used to characterize six domains of cognitive and functional performance applicable to Alzheimer's disease and related dementias: memory, orientation, judgment and problem solving, community affairs, home and hobbies, and personal care. The information is obtained through an interview of the patient and a reliable informant (e.g., family member). This score is useful for characterizing and tracking a patient's level of impairment/dementia.
  - 0 suggests normal
  - 0.5 to 4 suggests questionable cognitive impairment
  - 0.5 to 2.5 suggests questionable impairment
  - 3.0 to 4.0 suggests very mild dementia
  - 4.5 to 9.0 suggests mild dementia
  - 9.5 to 15.5 suggests moderate dementia
  - 16.0 to 18.0 suggests severe dementia

#### *Appendix E: Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease*

- AD
  - Interference with ability to function at work or at usual activities
  - A decline from a previous level of functioning and performing
  - Not explained by delirium or major psychiatric disorder
  - Cognitive impairment established by history-taking from the patient and a knowledgeable informant; and objective bedside mental status examination or neuropsychological testing
  - Cognitive impairment involves a minimum of two of the following domains:
    - Impaired ability to acquire and remember new information
    - Impaired reasoning and handling of complex tasks, poor judgment
    - Impaired visuospatial abilities
    - Impaired language functions (speaking, reading, writing)
    - Changes in personality, behavior, or comportsment
  - Insidious onset (gradual onset over months to years, not over hours to days)
  - Clear-cut history of worsening
  - Initial and most prominent cognitive deficits are one of the following:

- Amnestic presentation (impairment in learning and recall of recently learned information)
- Nonamnestic presentation in either a language presentation (prominently word-finding deficits), a visuospatial presentation with visual deficits, or executive dysfunction (prominently impaired reasoning, judgment and/or problem solving)
- No evidence of substantial concomitant cerebrovascular disease, core features of dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB), prominent features of behavioral variant frontotemporal dementia (FTD) or prominent features of semantic or nonfluent/agrammatic variants of primary progressive aphasia (PPA), or evidence of another concurrent, active neurologic or non-neurologic disease or use of medication that could have a substantial effect on cognition
- Mild cognitive impairment due to AD – core clinical criteria
  - Concern regarding change in cognition obtained from the patient, from an informant who knows the patient well, or from a skilled clinician observing the patient
  - Objective evidence of impairment in one or more cognitive domains that is not explained by age or education
  - Preservation of independence in functional abilities
  - Not demented
- Although tests for blood-based biomarkers are now available to aid in diagnosing Alzheimer’s disease, their proper use in clinical practice is unestablished. They are not currently able to fully replace the need for confirmatory testing with positron emission tomography scan or cerebrospinal fluid testing, and as such, their ability to determine eligibility for treatment with Kisunla is unconfirmed.

**V. Dosage and Administration**

Indication	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
AD	Kisunla is administered IV every 4 weeks according to the following titration schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Infusion 1: 350 mg</li> <li>○ Infusion 2: 700 mg</li> <li>○ Infusion 3: 1,050 mg</li> <li>Infusion 4 and beyond: 1,400 mg</li> </ul>	1,400 mg every 4 weeks

**VI. Product Availability**

Single-dose vial for injection: 350 mg/20 mL

**VII. References**

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10. Jack CR, Andrews JS, Beach TG, et al. Revised criteria for diagnosis and staging of Alzheimer’s disease: Alzheimer’s Association Workgroup. *Alzheimer’s Dement*. 2024;20:5143-69. doi: 10.1002/alz.13859.

**Coding Implications**

Codes referenced in this clinical policy are for informational purposes only. Inclusion or exclusion of any codes does not guarantee coverage. Providers should reference the most up-to-date sources of professional coding guidance prior to the submission of claims for reimbursement of covered services.

HCPCS Codes	Description
J0175	Injection, donanemab-azbt, 2 mg

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date
Policy created	10/2024
4Q 2025 annual review: updated recommended dosing regimen per the Prescribing Information; for Continued Therapy criteria, clarified that the neurocognitive testing results used for coverage redetermination should be “recent (within the last month)” to ensure that Kisunla continues to be used only for those who remain in the mild stage of disease; updated the requirement for follow-up pre-infusion MRIs to be done within the prior week instead of within the prior month, to align with the approach for Legembi; references reviewed and updated.	10/2025
Removed the age requirement; requirement for follow-up MRIs in the Continued Therapy section; added Legembi Iqlik as a recently FDA-	04/2026

<b>Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals</b>	<b>Date</b>
approved alternative formulation of Leqembi that should not be used concomitantly with Kisunla; extended initial and continued approval durations to 6 and 12 months, respectively.	