

ASRS Patient Issue Brief: Most Favored Nation Policy

The American Society of Retina Specialists (ASRS) opposes Medicare's Most Favored Nation (MFN) policy set to begin on January 1, 2021. This policy puts your sight in jeopardy by limiting access to sight-saving treatments for age-related macular degeneration (AMD), diabetic retinopathy, and other blinding retinal conditions.

Issue Details:

On November 20, 2020, the Trump Administration announced the MFN policy designed to reduce drug prices. While we agree with the intention, the MFN plan as written is flawed and may reduce your access to sight-saving drugs.

Starting January 1, 2021, the MFN policy will require Medicare to reduce payment for certain physician-administered Part B drugs (including Eylea and Lucentis) to align with the lowest prices found in comparable countries. As a result, your physician will have to pay more for these drugs than Medicare will reimburse. This flawed policy creates a very difficult situation in which your doctor will be forced to choose between financial stability and optimal patient care.

Retina specialists rely on Eylea and Lucentis to help patients maintain their vision and slow the progression of AMD, diabetic retinopathy, and other retina diseases. However, the MFN policy threatens to disrupt your treatment plan by creating barriers to these sight-saving drugs. Medicare has acknowledged as much by saying Medicare patients may "experience access to care impacts" by being forced to use "alternative therapy that may have lower efficacy or greater risks, or postponing or forgoing treatment."

Treatment options for retina conditions are not interchangeable, and the MFN policy limits retina specialists' ability to ensure patients receive the most appropriate treatment.

ASRS opposes Medicare's MFN policy as it establishes barriers to obtaining sight-saving drugs and increases patients' risk of vision loss. If you agree, please take action today.