Acalabrutinib (Calquence) and its active metabolite inhibit Bruton tyrosine kinase (BTK) by irreversibly bonding to the active BTK site. This prevents activation of the signaling proteins CD86 and CD69, as well as inhibits proliferation and survival of malignant B cells.

**Length of Authorization**
- Initial: Six months
- Renewal: 12 months

**Quantity Limits**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Product Name</th>
<th>Dosage Form</th>
<th>Indication</th>
<th>Quantity Limit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acalabrutinib (Calquence)</td>
<td>100 mg capsule</td>
<td>Mantle cell lymphoma (previously treated); Chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL); small lymphocytic lymphoma (SLL)</td>
<td>60 capsules/30 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Initial Evaluation**

I. Acalabrutinib (Calquence) may be considered medically necessary when the following criteria below are met:
   A. Member is 18 years of age or older; AND
   B. Medication is prescribed by, or in consultation with, an oncologist or hematologist; AND
   C. Member has not experienced disease progression while on a BTK inhibitor [e.g. zanubrutinib (Brukinsa®), ibritinib (Imbruvica®)]; AND
   D. A diagnosis of one of the following:
      1. **Mantle cell lymphoma (MCL); AND**
         i. Treatment with at least one first-line therapy for MCL [e.g., rituximab, bendamustine + rituximab, CHOP (cyclophosphamide, doxorubicin, vincristine, and prednisone) - based regimen, Hyper-CVAD (cyclophosphamide, vincristine, doxorubicin, and dexamethasone), bortezomib or carfilzomib, stem-cell transplant, lenalidomide, etc.] has been ineffective, contraindicated, or not tolerated; OR
      2. **Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL) or small lymphocytic lymphoma (SLL); AND**
         i. Medication is used in **one** of the following settings:
            a. Previously untreated CLL/SLL; AND
i. Medication will be used as monotherapy or in combination with obinutuzumab (Gazyva); OR
b. Relapsed or refractory after at least one prior systemic therapy; AND
   i. Member has not experienced disease progression while on venetoclax (Venclexta) or a phosphoinositide-3 kinase inhibitor [e.g. duvelisib (Copiktra), idelalisib (Zydelig)]; AND
   ii. Medication will not be used in combination with other oncologic medications (i.e., will be used as monotherapy)

II. Acalabrutinib (Calquence) is considered investigational when used for all other conditions, including but not limited to:
   A. Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma
   B. Head and neck squamous cell carcinoma
   C. Ovarian cancer
   D. Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)
   E. Severe Chronic Graft Versus Host Disease
   F. Waldenström’s macroglobulinemia (WM)

Renewal Evaluation
I. Member has received a previous prior authorization approval for this agent through this health plan; AND
II. Member is not continuing therapy based off being established on therapy through samples, manufacturer coupons, or otherwise. Initial policy criteria must be met for the member to qualify for renewal evaluation through this health plan; AND
III. The medication is prescribed by, or in consultation with, an oncologist; AND
IV. Medication will not be used in combination with other oncologic medications (i.e., will be used as monotherapy); OR
   A. Acalabrutinib (Calquence) will be used in combination with obinutuzumab (Gazyva) in the setting of previously untreated CLL/SLL; AND
V. Documentation is provided indicating disease response to therapy, as defined by: stabilization of disease, decrease in the size of the tumor, or tumor spread.

Supporting Evidence
I. Safety and efficacy of acalabrutinib (Calquence) has not been established in the pediatric population.
II. MCL, CLL, and SLL are difficult, life threatening diseases, accordingly treatment with acalabrutinib (Calquence) requires consultation with an oncologist or hematologist.
III. There is no published data from a head-to-head studies between acalabrutinib (Calquence) and other BTK inhibitors [zanubrutinib (Brukinsa), ibrutinib (Imbruvica)] to show superiority of one BTK inhibitor over another. There is also no published data in the use of BTK inhibitors in
patients diagnosed with MCL or CLL/SLL that have relapsed or are refractory to other BTK inhibitors. Additionally, no data is available to show one BTK inhibitor could overcome common mechanisms of resistance of BTK inhibitors.

IV. Acalabrutinib (Calquence) was studied in an open-label, phase 2 study in patients with relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma. Oral acalabrutinib (100 mg twice per day) was given until disease progression or unacceptable toxicity. The most common prior therapies in clinical trials included rituximab, bendamustine + rituximab, CHOP (cyclophosphamide, doxorubicin, vincristine, and prednisone) - based regimen, Hyper-CVAD (cyclophosphamide, vincristine, doxorubicin, and dexamethasone), bortezomib or carfilzomib, stem-cell transplant and lenalidomide.

V. The efficacy of acalabrutinib (Calquence) in patients with CLL was demonstrated in two randomized, controlled trials which included patients with SLL because it is the same disease. In the ELEVATE-TN trial, a randomized, multicenter, open-label, actively controlled, 3 arm trial of acalabrutinib in combination with obinutuzumab, acalabrutinib monotherapy, and obinutuzumab in combination with chlorambucil in patients with previously untreated chronic lymphocytic leukemia, both the acalabrutinib (Calquence) monotherapy arm and acalabrutinib (Calquence) in combination with obinutuzumab arm significantly prolonged progression free survival (PFS) when compared to obinutuzumab plus chlorambucil.

VI. The efficacy of acalabrutinib (Calquence) in patients with relapsed or refractory CLL was based on a multicenter, randomized, open-label trial (ASCEND). The trial enrolled patients with relapsed or refractory CLL after at least one prior systemic therapy, while excluding those with transformed disease, prolymphocytic leukemia, or who had previous treatment with venetoclax, a Bruton tyrosine kinase inhibitor, or a phosphoinositide-3 kinase inhibitor. Interim analysis results indicate acalabrutinib (Calquence) significantly prolonged PFS when compared to rituximab combined with idelalisib or bendamustine.

Investigational or Not Medically Necessary Uses

I. Acalabrutinib (Calquence) has not been sufficiently evaluated outside of MCL and CLL/SLL. Limited evidence is available consisting of early phase studies evaluating use in other cancers; however, safety and efficacy have not been established in these conditions:
   A. Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma
   B. Head and neck squamous cell carcinoma
   C. Ovarian cancer
   D. Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)
   E. Severe Chronic Graft Versus Host Disease
   F. Waldenström’s macroglobulinemia (WM)

References


**Policy Implementation/Update:**

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<th>Date Created</th>
<th>January 2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Effective</td>
<td>February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Updated</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Reviewed</td>
<td>12/2019</td>
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**Action and Summary of Changes**

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<th>Change Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Updated criteria to policy format. Addition of age requirement to ages 18 and older. Require member has not experienced disease progression while on a BTK inhibitor. Added new indication of CLL/SLL.</td>
<td>12/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria created</td>
<td>01/2018</td>
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