

Clinical Policy: Ophthalmic Riboflavin (Photrexa, Photrexa Viscous)

Reference Number: CP.PHAR.536

Effective Date: 06.01.21

Last Review Date: 05.26

Line of Business: Commercial, HIM/ICHRA, Medicaid

[Coding Implications](#)

[Revision Log](#)

See [Important Reminder](#) at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

Description

Photrexa[®] and Photrexa[®] Viscous are topical ophthalmic photoenhancers.

FDA Approved Indication(s)

Photrexa and Photrexa Viscous are indicated for use in corneal collagen cross-linking in combination with the KXL[™] System for the treatment of:

- Progressive keratoconus
- Corneal ectasia following refractive surgery

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 health plans affiliated with Centene Corporation[®] that Photrexa and Photrexa Viscous are **medically necessary** when the following criteria are met:

I. Initial Approval Criteria*

**Approval of the drug does not translate to an approval of the corneal cross-linking procedure*

A. Progressive Keratoconus and Corneal Ectasia (must meet all):

1. Diagnosis of one of the following (a or b):
 - a. Progressive keratoconus;
 - b. Corneal ectasia following refractive surgery;
2. Prescribed by or in consultation with an ophthalmologist;
3. Age \geq 14 years;
4. Dose does not exceed one kit per eye.

Approval duration: 6 months (up to one kit per eye)

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

1. If this drug has recently (within the last 6 months) undergone a label change (e.g., newly approved indication, age expansion, new dosing regimen) that is not yet reflected in this policy, refer to one of the following policies (a or b):
 - a. For drugs on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace/ICHRA) or PDL (Medicaid), the no coverage criteria policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.33 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.255 for Medicaid; or
 - b. For drugs NOT on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace/ICHRA) or PDL (Medicaid), the non-formulary policy for the

relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.103 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.16 for Medicaid; or

2. If the requested use (e.g., diagnosis, age, dosing regimen) is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized) AND criterion 1 above does not apply, refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid.

II. Continued Therapy*

**Approval of the drug does not translate to an approval of the corneal cross-linking procedure*

A. Progressive Keratoconus and Corneal Ectasia (must meet all):

1. Member meets one of the following (a or b):
 - a. Currently receiving medication via Centene benefit or member has previously met initial approval criteria;
 - b. Member is currently receiving medication and is enrolled in a state and product with continuity of care regulations (*refer to state specific addendums for CC.PHARM.03A and CC.PHARM.03B*);
2. At least 6 months have passed since member's last collagen cross-linking procedure;
3. Member is responding positively to therapy as evidenced by a reduction in diopters in the treated eye(s);
4. If request is for a dose increase, new dose does not exceed one kit per eye.

Approval duration: 6 months (up to one kit per eye)

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

1. If this drug has recently (within the last 6 months) undergone a label change (e.g., newly approved indication, age expansion, new dosing regimen) that is not yet reflected in this policy, refer to one of the following policies (a or b):
 - a. For drugs on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace/ICHRA) or PDL (Medicaid), the no coverage criteria policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.33 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.255 for Medicaid; or
 - b. For drugs NOT on the formulary (commercial, health insurance marketplace/ICHRA) or PDL (Medicaid), the non-formulary policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.190 for commercial, HIM.PA.103 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.16 for Medicaid; or
2. If the requested use (e.g., diagnosis, age, dosing regimen) is NOT specifically listed under section III (Diagnoses/Indications for which coverage is NOT authorized) AND criterion 1 above does not apply, refer to the off-label use policy for the relevant line of business: CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid.

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 – CP.CPA.09 for commercial, HIM.PA.154 for health insurance marketplace/ICHRA, and CP.PMN.53 for Medicaid or evidence of coverage documents.

IV. Appendices/General Information

Appendix A: Abbreviation/Acronym Key

FDA: Food and Drug Administration

Appendix B: Therapeutic Alternatives

Not applicable

Appendix C: Contraindications/Boxed Warnings

None reported

V. Dosage and Administration

Drug Name	Dosing Regimen	Maximum Dose
<p>Riboflavin 5'-phosphate in 20% dextran ophthalmic solution) 0.146% for topical ophthalmic use (Photrex Viscous)</p> <p>Riboflavin 5'-phosphate ophthalmic solution) 0.146% for topical ophthalmic use (Photrex)</p>	<p><u>Dosage and Administration, Section 2: Prescribing Information:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debride the epithelium using standard aseptic technique using topical anesthesia. • Then instill 1 drop of <i>Photrex Viscous</i> topically on the eye every 2 minutes for 30 minutes. • After 30 minutes, examine the eye under slit lamp for presence of a yellow flare in the anterior chamber. If flare is not detected, instill 1 drop of <i>Photrex Viscous</i> every 2 minutes for an additional 2 to 3 drops and recheck for yellow flare. Repeat as necessary. • Once flare is observed, perform ultrasound pachymetry. If corneal thickness is less than 400 microns, instill 2 drops of <i>Photrex</i> every 5 to 10 seconds until the corneal thickness increases to at least 400 microns. • Irradiation should not be performed unless this 400 micron threshold is met and the yellow flare is seen. 	<p>See dosing regimen</p>

VI. Product Availability

Cross-linking kit: containing the following components for use with the KXL System:

- Riboflavin 5'-phosphate ophthalmic solution 0.146% for topical ophthalmic use (Photrex)
- Riboflavin 5'-phosphate in 20% dextran ophthalmic solution 0.146% for topical ophthalmic use (Photrex Viscous)

VII. References

1. Photrexa Viscous and Photrexa Prescribing Information. Burlington, MA: Avedro; February 2025. Available at: https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2025/203324s010lbl.pdf. Accessed February 11, 2026.
2. Avedro Inc., KXL System: Operator’s Manual. Burlington, MA: Avedro, Inc. Copyright 2019. ML-00006 Rev R. Available at: <https://www.glaukos.com/int/cornea/kxl-system/>. Accessed February 11, 2026.

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
J2787	Riboflavin 5’-phosphate, ophthalmic solution, up to 3 ml

Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals	Date	P&T Approval Date
2Q 2022 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	01.27.22	05.22
Template changes applied to other diagnoses/indications and continued therapy section.	10.05.22	
2Q 2023 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	02.02.23	05.23
2Q 2024 annual review: updated HCPCS code description for J2787; references reviewed and updated.	01.12.24	05.24
2Q 2025 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated.	02.07.25	05.25
2Q 2026 annual review: no significant changes; references reviewed and updated. Added ICHRA line of business.	03.31.26	05.26

Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information. The Health Plan makes no representations and accepts no liability with respect to the content of any external information used or relied upon in developing this clinical policy. This clinical policy is consistent with standards of medical practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved. “Health Plan” means a health

plan that has adopted this clinical policy and that is operated or administered, in whole or in part, by Centene Management Company, LLC, or any of such health plan's affiliates, as applicable.

The purpose of this clinical policy is to provide a guide to medical necessity, which is a component of the guidelines used to assist in making coverage decisions and administering benefits. It does not constitute a contract or guarantee regarding payment or results. Coverage decisions and the administration of benefits are subject to all terms, conditions, exclusions, and limitations of the coverage documents (e.g., evidence of coverage, certificate of coverage, policy, contract of insurance, etc.), as well as to state and federal requirements and applicable Health Plan-level administrative policies and procedures.

This clinical policy is effective as of the date determined by the Health Plan. The date of posting may not be the effective date of this clinical policy. This clinical policy may be subject to applicable legal and regulatory requirements relating to provider notification. If there is a discrepancy between the effective date of this clinical policy and any applicable legal or regulatory requirement, the requirements of law and regulation shall govern. The Health Plan retains the right to change, amend or withdraw this clinical policy, and additional clinical policies may be developed and adopted as needed, at any time.

This clinical policy does not constitute medical advice, medical treatment, or medical care. It is not intended to dictate to providers how to practice medicine. Providers are expected to exercise professional medical judgment in providing the most appropriate care, and are solely responsible for the medical advice and treatment of members. This clinical policy is not intended to recommend treatment for members. Members should consult with their treating physician in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions.

Providers referred to in this clinical policy are independent contractors who exercise independent judgment and over whom the Health Plan has no control or right of control. Providers are not agents or employees of the Health Plan.

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Note:

For Medicaid members, when state Medicaid coverage provisions conflict with the coverage provisions in this clinical policy, state Medicaid coverage provisions take precedence. Please refer to the state Medicaid manual for any coverage provisions pertaining to this clinical policy.

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