

SelectHealth Pharmacy Services will **require** a WHO Fracture Risk Assessment (FRAX) to be performed for patients that are **diagnosed with osteopenia** (as defined by T-scores between -1.0 and -2.5) **for consideration of preauthorization review for intravenous therapy with Reclast (zoledronic acid injection), Boniva (ibandronate sodium injection) or Prolia (denosumab).**

The World Health Organization has implemented the Fracture Risk Assessment Tool (FRAX) to better improve identification of patients at high risk of fracture for treatment based on a patient's risk factors such as age, sex, previous fractures, and patients' history of hip fractures, smoking, glucocorticoid use, rheumatoid arthritis and number of alcoholic drinks per day.ⁱ The FRAX algorithm then provides a figure indicating a ten-year fracture probability as a percentage, which gives guidance for determining access to treatment in healthcare systems. **For further information about FRAX and to access the on-line calculation tool or to obtain paper copies of the assessment tool go to www.shef.ac.uk/FRAX/.**

The Annals of Internal Medicine published a systematic review, developed under the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Effective Health Care Program, on agents available to treat osteoporosis.ⁱⁱ The review compares the benefits in fracture reduction and the harms from adverse events of various therapies for osteoporosis in men and women with low bone density or osteoporosis. The review reported that within the nitrogen-containing bisphosphonates (alendronate, ibandronate, risedronate, and zoledronic acid), based on available evidence at the time of the review, it was insufficient to determine the relative superiority of any agent or whether the agents were more effective in some populations than others. Currently there are no trials with head-to-head comparisons using two or more agents that have enrolled sufficient sample sizes to detect large differences in risk.

ⁱ FRAX WHO Fracture Risk Assessment Tool. Available at: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/FRAX/index>. Accessed February 2010.

ⁱⁱ MacLean C, Alexander A, Carter J, et al. *Comparative Effectiveness of Treatments To Prevent Fractures in Men and Women With Low Bone Density or Osteoporosis*, Comparative Effectiveness Review No. 12 (Prepared by Southern California/RAND Evidence-based Practice Center under Contract No. 290-02-0003). Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, December 2007. AHRQ Publication No. 08-EHC008-1. Available at: <http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/search-for-guides-reviews-and-reports/?productid=73&pageaction=displayproduct>.