



## Vitreo-Retina Society of the Philippines

Unit 815 Medical Plaza Makati Condominium  
Amorsolo St., corner Dela Rosa St., Legaspi Village,  
Makati City, Philippines  
Email: [vrsp.org@gmail.com](mailto:vrsp.org@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.vrsp.org.ph](http://www.vrsp.org.ph)

### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2024-2025

**Jeffrey C. Lim, MD**  
*President*

**Eleonore B. Iguban, MD**  
*Vice President*

**Catherine Dianne R. Delfino, MD**  
*Secretary*

**Maria Cecilia G. Arenal, MD**  
*Treasurer*

**Rachelle G. Anzures, MD**  
**Marie Joan V. Loy, MD**  
**Paolo Antonio S. Silva, MD**  
*Board Members*

**Harvey S. Uy, MD**  
*Immediate Past President*

## Position Paper: Approval and Compensability of Code 67025, or creation of a new Code 67028, for Intravitreal Injections of Anti-VEGF Agents, Steroids, and Antibiotics.

### Executive Summary

This position paper recommends that the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) formally approve and provide compensability for the use of RVS code 67025, or create a new RVS code (e.g., 67028), to cover intravitreal injections involving a range of therapeutic agents. These include, but are not limited to, anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF) medications, corticosteroids, and intravitreal antibiotics used in the treatment of various retinal and ocular conditions. The adoption of this policy will address a significant gap in eye care coverage, improve patient outcomes, lay the groundwork for Universal Health Care, and align PhilHealth with global best practices in retinal disease management.

### Background

#### Intravitreal Injections: Clinical Significance

Intravitreal injections are a cornerstone in the management of various retinal diseases, including age-related macular degeneration (AMD), diabetic retinopathy, and retinal vein occlusion. These conditions, if left untreated, can lead to irreversible vision loss and blindness. The procedure involves the direct delivery of medication into the vitreous cavity of the eye, allowing for targeted therapy with minimal systemic side effects.

- **Anti-VEGF agents:** First-line treatment for neovascular retinal diseases.
- **Steroids:** Used for inflammatory and edematous retinal conditions.
- **Antibiotics:** Employed in the management of intraocular infections, such as catastrophic endophthalmitis, and as prophylaxis in select cases.

### Rationale for Approval and Compensability

#### 1. Clinical Efficacy and Necessity

- **Evidence-based Treatment:** Numerous studies and clinical guidelines support the efficacy of anti-VEGF agents and steroids in preventing vision loss and improving visual outcomes in retinal diseases.
- **Standard of Care:** Intravitreal injections are recognized globally as the standard of care for these conditions.

## 2. Current Coverage Gaps

- **Financial Burden:** The cost of anti-VEGF therapy can be substantial, considering the chronic nature of the diseases being treated, making it unaffordable for most Filipinos, especially those requiring multiple injections per year.
- **Limited Access:** Without PhilHealth coverage, many patients forego or delay treatment, resulting in preventable blindness and increased long-term healthcare costs.

## 3. Alignment with Global and Regional Practices

- **International Precedents:** Neighboring countries, such as Taiwan, have adopted reimbursement policies for anti-VEGF therapies, resulting in improved patient access and outcomes.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Studies have shown that including intravitreal injections in national health insurance packages is cost-effective, reducing the societal and economic burden of blindness.

## 4. Code 67025 or 67028: Suitability and Precedent

- **Existing RVS Code: Code 67025** (“Injection of vitreous substitute, pars plana or limbal approach”) is already recognized in the PhilHealth procedural listing.
- **International Consistency: Code 67028** (“Intravitreal injection of a pharmacologic agent [separate procedure]”) is widely recognized internationally, particularly in the United States and Western clinical reimbursement systems, as the specific procedural code for injections of anti-VEGF agents, steroids, and antibiotics into the vitreous cavity.
- **Procedural Accuracy:** Unlike 67025, which is primarily used for the injection of vitreous substitutes, 67028 directly refers to pharmacologic agent delivery via intravitreal injection—precisely matching the clinical service involved in retinal therapeutics.
- **Administrative Clarity:** Using code 67028 reduces ambiguity for both providers and payors, ensuring only appropriate pharmacologic intravitreal injections are claimed under this code.

## Recommendations

1. Approve **RVS Code 67025** for use in intravitreal injections of anti-VEGF agents, steroids, and antibiotics or create a new code (**RVS code 67028** Intravitreal Injection of Pharmacological Agent) to cover the said procedure.
2. Establish Clear Guidelines for indications, documentation, and reimbursement to ensure appropriate utilization and prevent misuse.
3. Set Reasonable Case Rates that reflect the actual costs and promote access while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
4. Educate Providers and Members regarding the availability and criteria for coverage to maximize the benefit to PhilHealth members.
5. To mitigate the potential for abuse, a cap on the maximum number of compensable injections per eye can be set (Suggested number of 9 injections per eye per year). Furthermore, ancillary tests such as an optical coherence tomography (OCT) or a fundus photograph may be submitted as evidence of existing disease.
6. The compensability of the procedure may be limited by PHIC to accredited healthcare providers who are also Diplomate members of the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology, to ensure adequate training and knowledge.
6. To further elucidate any issues that may need clarification, the VRSP Board is willing to set a meeting with representatives of PHIC to discuss details or alternatives.

## Expected Benefits

- Improved Access: More patients will receive timely, sight-saving treatments.
- Reduced Blindness: Early intervention will decrease the incidence of preventable blindness, reducing the long-term burden on families and the healthcare system.
- Financial Protection: Members will be shielded from catastrophic health expenditures related to retinal disease management.

## Conclusion

Approving and compensating RVS code 67025 or creating a new RVS code 67028 for intravitreal injections of anti-VEGF agents, steroids, and antibiotics is a necessary step toward equitable and effective eye care for all PhilHealth members, paving the way for Universal Health Care coverage. This policy will bring the Philippines in line with international standards, address a critical public health need, and fulfill PhilHealth's mandate of providing accessible and quality healthcare to Filipinos.

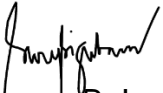
Prepared by:



**Jeffrey C. Lim, MD**

President

Vitreoretina Society of the Philippines



**Eleonore B. Iguban, MD**

Vice-President



**Catherine Dianne R. Delfino, MD**

Secretary



**Ma. Cecilia G. Arenal, MD**

Treasurer



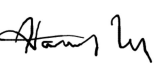
**Rachelle G. Anzures, MD**



**Marie Joan V. Lov, MD**



**Paolo Antonio S. Silva, MD**



**Harvey S. Uy, MD**

Immediate Past President