

Via Email

June 18, 2025

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Commissioner, Office of Health Strategy
Senior Advisor to the Governor, Health and Human Services
c/o Patty Blodgett, Principal Healthcare Analyst
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Dear Commissioner Gifford:

We write in response to your letter dated April 29, 2025 requesting Johnson & Johnson's attendance at the Office of Health Strategy's public hearing on June 23, 2025. Thank you for your inquiry. We respectfully decline the request to attend, but we submit the following comments in response to your request.

J&J is strongly committed to supporting patients' affordable access to our medicines and to transparency. As such, we would like to share key data from our "2023 U.S. Pricing Transparency Report" ("Report").¹ As disclosed in the Report, J&J supports patient access to medicines through vigorous private-market negotiations with health insurance companies, pharmacy benefit managers ("PBMs"), and other intermediaries that dispense medications (e.g., hospitals and clinics). J&J negotiates lower net prices to expand access and make drugs more affordable for patients, not to benefit middlemen and other intermediaries.

J&J's net prices have declined by 18.6% since 2016, and our rebates, discounts, and fees to middlemen, private insurers, and other entities continued to grow, reaching \$42.8 billion in 2023. These discounts, rebates, and fees accounted for 58% of every dollar in J&J's gross sales. STELARA is no exception. Its net price has decreased significantly since 2016, and the increase in commercial spending and payment per 30-day supply in 2023 alleged by OHS was not likely caused by any change in J&J's net price for the medication; rather, any such increase would be driven by patient/provider demand. Additionally, free market principles have generated significant competition for STELARA since 2023, including FDA approval of multiple biosimilars and an unbranded biologic.

To the extent that patients are not directly benefiting from lower net prices, we offer various support programs to help patients. In 2023, our patient assistance programs helped more than one million underinsured patients access their prescribed J&J therapies. We also donated \$3.8 billion in free products and support to help low-income patients obtain the therapies they need.

¹ 2023 Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine U.S. Pricing Transparency Report, Johnson & Johnson, <https://transparencyreport.janssen.com/transparency-report-2023> (last visited May 27, 2025).

Through the “STELARA withMe” Savings Program, eligible patients in Connecticut using commercial or private insurance may pay as little as \$5 per dose.² Additional affordability support for STELARA is available for eligible Connecticut patients through the Johnson & Johnson Patient Assistance Program.³ Through this program, J&J medicines, such as STELARA, “may be provided at no cost to eligible patients who are uninsured or have inadequate coverage through commercial, employer group, or government insurance coverage and are not supported by other offerings from J&J.”⁴

In addition, various stakeholders within the supply chain are involved in determining patients’ out-of-pocket cost for their medicine, such as PBMs and insurers. J&J supports patient-centered solutions that directly increase affordability of medicines, including:

- Requiring that manufacturer rebates and discounts provided to PBMs and insurers are passed through to patients at the pharmacy counter;
- Preventing PBMs from capturing manufacturer copay assistance for their benefit by diverting funds intended to reduce patient cost sharing; and
- Seeking increased transparency around the practices of PBMs and their affiliated entities that increase patient cost and limit access to medicine.

We know that patients are counting on us to develop, bring to market, and support access to our medicines. We live this mission every day and are humbled by the patients who trust us to help them fight their diseases and live healthier lives.

Sincerely,



Michael Valenta
Vice President, Value, Access & Pricing, Strategic Customer Group
Johnson & Johnson Services, Inc.

² Stelara withMe, Janssen, <https://asset.janssencarepath.com/document/stelara-patient-affordability-chart.pdf> (last visited May 27, 2025).

³ Johnson & Johnson Patient Assistance Program, Johnson & Johnson, <https://www.account1.jnjwithme.com/patient-assistance> (last visited May 27, 2025).

⁴ *Id.*