

PerSpectives

Winning the Coverage Game:
How Gini scores can help you differentiate
payers by management strategy



Executive Summary

Payers act as gatekeepers who decide which drugs to cover and how to cover them. Each payer's behavior can vary significantly, with their own specific rules for different drugs, which they apply and enforce in unique ways. How can we make sense of this variability to guide strategic decisions and craft targeted messaging so brands can achieve their access goals?

The Gini score is a measure of variance, commonly used in macroeconomic analyses to highlight inequality in populations outside of healthcare. In the analysis below, we applied the Gini score to individual payers to assess whether and how their coverage behavior varies across drugs approved for a specific therapeutic area—multiple sclerosis (MS). While this example focuses on MS, the Gini score can be applied to any therapeutic area. Our findings could be grouped into four distinct types of payers: **Open Access**, **Selective Access**, **Picking Losers**, and **Picking Winners**. By understanding these payer behavior patterns, pharmaceutical manufacturers can develop better strategies to get their drugs covered, saving time and resources while expanding access.

Open
Access

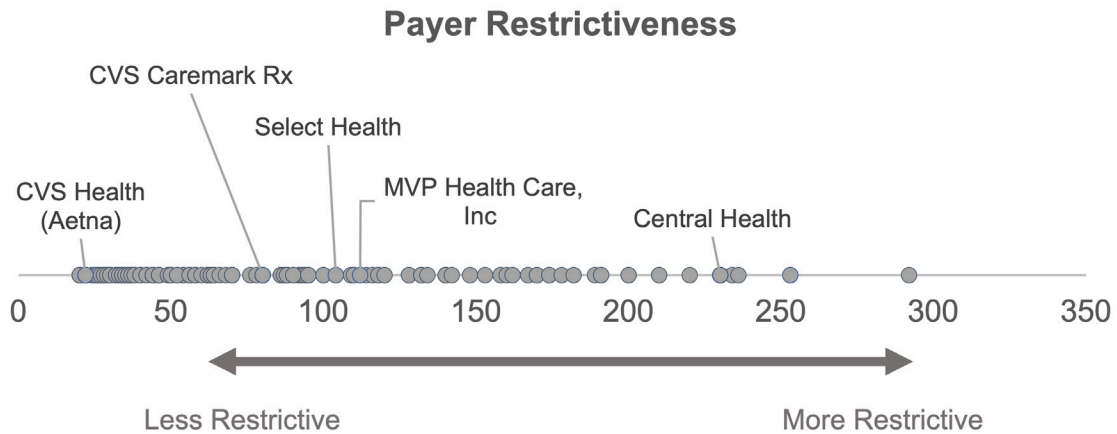
Selective
Access

Picking
Losers

Picking
Winners

Restrictiveness Does Not Tell the Whole Story

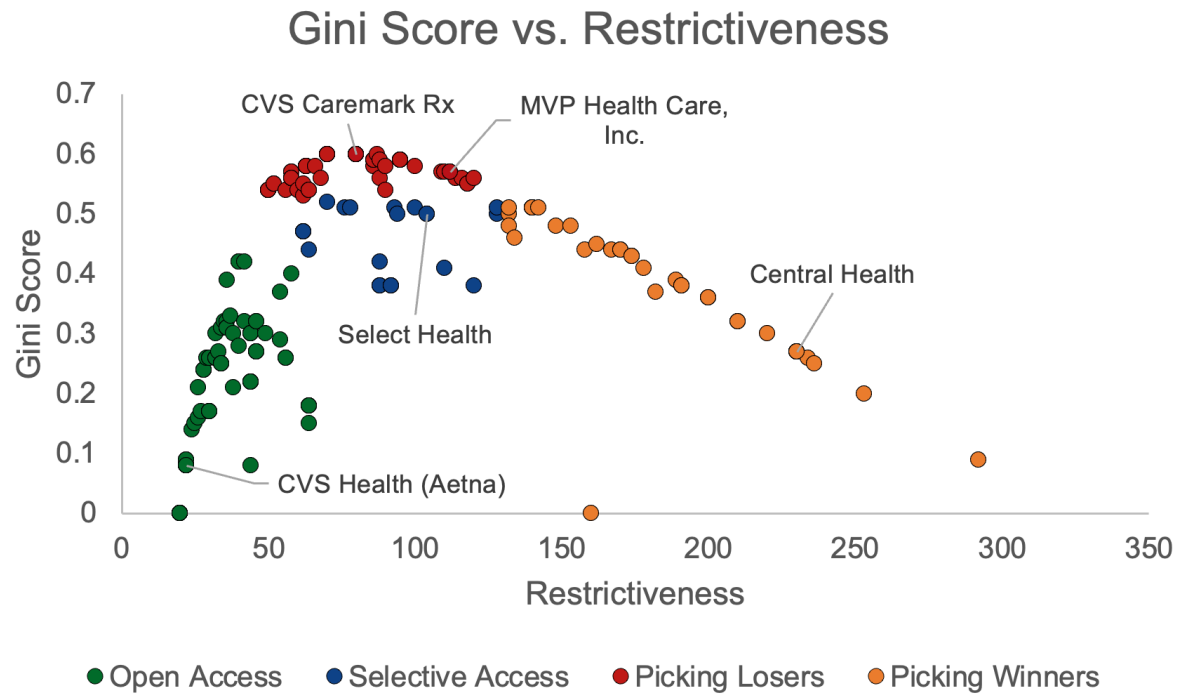
Access marketers often segment payers based on their level of restrictiveness in a given therapeutic category. While this approach usually makes sense, it has limitations. To illustrate, let's look at the MS category. Using ten MS drugs currently on the market, we assigned a numeric value to each drug based on its coverage position. We then summed these values to create a restrictiveness score for each payer.



The Payer Restrictiveness plot illustrates category-specific payer-imposed limitations across all therapies based on coverage criteria, ranging from the least restrictive (no step edits) to the most restrictive (medical exceptions) with the majority falling in between these extremes. To make sense of these intermediate payers in an actionable way, we introduce the Gini score. This score provides deeper insights into how payers operate or behave differently within this middle ground.



Understanding Payer Behavior Through the Gini Score



The Gini score reveals the *variability* in coverage for each payer, with values ranging from 0 to 1. A score of 0 indicates equal coverage for all drugs, while a score of 1 indicates that one drug receives all the restrictive coverage. The Gini score adds another dimension to our restrictiveness analysis.





By plotting the Gini vs Restrictiveness scores on one graph, we can see a wider range of differences among middle-ground payers. **Even among payers with similar restrictiveness scores, there can be notable differences in how each drug is managed.** We categorized payer behavior into four distinct groups:

- **Open Access:** Payers cover all products with the least restrictive approach
- **Selective Access:** Payers use a mix of coverage positions to obtain the desired level of restrictiveness
- **Picking Losers:** Payers use medical exceptions for a few drugs while granting open access to the majority of options
- **Picking Winners:** Payers require medical exceptions for the majority of drugs and grant open access selectively to a few products, often excluding entire drug classes

The table below illustrates the typical coverage pattern for each group, showing how payers distribute the ten MS drugs (shown as circles) across the step categories. In this example:

- A typical **Open Access** payer requires no step edits for the majority of products
- The **Selective Access** group is where payers demonstrated a balanced approach across multiple steps—a situation where placement could likely be negotiated
- The **Picking Losers** group displayed a selective restriction strategy (open access to many drugs, coupled with medical exceptions for a few)
- And finally, the **Picking Winners** group, with its preference for medical exceptions, exemplifies the opposite end of the spectrum, making these payers the most challenging for gaining coverage

Typical Payer Coverage in Group Category for MS

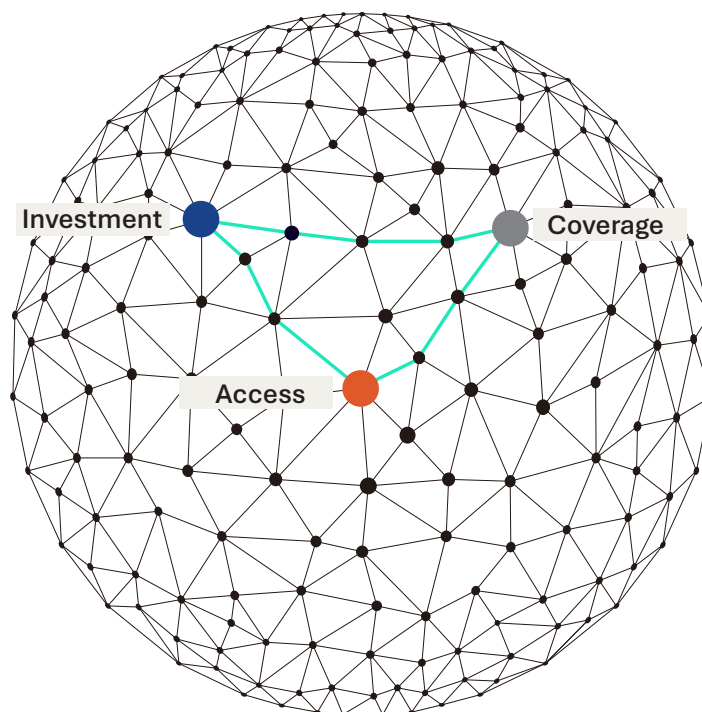
Group	No SE	Single SE	Double SE	Triple SE+	Medical Exception
Open Access					
Selective Access					
Picking Losers					
Picking Winners					

Navigating these four payer groups involves varying levels of risk for companies seeking coverage. The Gini score unveils not only coverage differences at the extremes but also the specific patterns of different payer behaviors.

What Could a Gini Score Evaluation Do for Your Brand?

Understand Payers, Get Better Access. By quantifying both the average restrictiveness and the variability in payer coverage within a category, pharmaceutical companies can tailor their market access strategies more effectively. Knowing a payer's Gini score for a therapeutic area empowers marketers to strategically prioritize payer engagements and optimize efforts to seek favorable coverage. For accounts that pick winners, marketers must emphatically elevate their brand — either by messaging, contracting, or both. Conversely, for accounts that pick losers, the approach might focus more on meeting a minimum value threshold to secure a position alongside other treatments and avoid being grouped with the "losers."

Provide a Holistic View of Payer Tendencies. Expanding this analysis to include multiple therapeutic areas enables us to understand how payers holistically manage formularies. The Gini score provides insight into which payers maintain a consistent behavioral pattern across therapeutic areas, as well as which therapeutic categories exhibit the greatest level of payer control. By identifying how each payer manages their entire formulary, we can forecast coverage for new therapeutic areas and/or develop tailored content for individual payers as needed.



Maximize Your Investment. Consistent formulary access is a key component of your brand's financial health. Utilizing a Gini score can help provide context for individual payer tendencies, which in turn impacts your marketing strategy. In fact, Gini score evaluations can be applied to other organized customers (GPOs, IDNs) as well, providing you with a complete coverage road map that's grounded in evidence.

Payer Sciences is ready to put the Gini score to work for your brand.

Learn more about us by visiting our [website](#), or click below to start the conversation.

