



State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health
Bureau of Health Services Financing

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 11, 2017

TO: Louisiana Medicaid Pharmacy Providers

FROM: Jen Steele, Medicaid Director

SUBJECT: Medicaid Pharmacy Opioid Limits for Fee for Service (FFS) and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)

In response to the opioid crisis in Louisiana, there is a statewide cohesive strategy to prevent overdose deaths and combat overutilization and diversion of opioids. Addressing opioid overutilization by implementing prescription limits is just one piece of this mission. The state does not intend to restrict opioid medications that are medically necessary; therefore override provisions and exemptions will be incorporated. See chart below for implementation of edits (current and future):

| Louisiana Medicaid Opioid Prescription Policy | | |
|---|---|---|
| Date | Population | Policy |
| Jan. 10, 2017 | Fee for Service (FFS) Patients: Acute & Chronic Pain | • Medicaid opioid 15-day quantity limits |
| March 22, 2017 | Managed Care Organization Patients: Acute Pain | • Implement 15-day quantity limit for opioid-naïve recipients |
| May 2017 | FFS and Managed Care Organization Patients: Acute & Chronic Pain | • Alert to notify providers of upcoming Morphine Equivalent Dosing (MED) limit of 120 mg per day for all opioid prescriptions |
| July 10, 2017 | FFS and Managed Care Organization Patients: Acute Pain | • 7-day quantity limit for opioid-naïve recipients or Morphine Equivalent Dosing (MED) limit of 120 mg per day, whichever is less |
| July 10, 2017 | FFS and Managed Care Organization Patients: Chronic Pain | • Morphine Equivalent Dosing (MED) limit of 120 mg per day for all opioid prescriptions |
| September 12, 2017 | FFS and Managed Care Organization Patients: Chronic Pain | • Morphine Equivalent Dosing (MED) limit of 90 mg per day for all opioid prescriptions |

Prescribers are encouraged to taper an opioid dose when appropriate. If a claim denies and tapering is not an option, then the prescriber should request an override through the appropriate prior authorization department utilizing the *Opioid Analgesic Treatment Worksheet*. This form is common to all Medicaid plans (FFS and the MCO plans) and will accommodate all opioid overrides (prior authorization and quantities/doses greater than the limits) when medically necessary.

The message that is conveyed to recipients is extremely important. Pharmacists, who are the forefront of recipient understanding and care, need to deliver a consistent and appropriate message to recipients. Recipients should know that edits such as these are implemented to ensure appropriate and medically necessary utilization of opioids while decreasing the risk of overutilization and diversion. The override process is established to ensure access to medically necessary doses of opioids for recipients who need them.

Exemption: Recipients with a diagnosis of cancer or palliative care will be exempt from the opioid quantity limits. Acceptable diagnosis codes that will bypass this edit:

| Diagnosis Code | Description |
|---|-----------------|
| C00.*-C96.* | Cancer |
| Z51.5 | Palliative Care |
| * - any number or letter or combination of UP TO FOUR numbers and letters of an assigned ICD-10-CM diagnosis code | |

The Department has compiled many resources to assist Louisiana Medicaid providers, please refer to the informational bulletin posted:

http://ldh.la.gov/assets/docs/BayouHealth/Informational_Bulletins/2017/IB17-2.pdf

If you have questions about the contents of this memo, you may contact:

| Plan | Provider Help Desk | Recipient Help Desk |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Aetna | (855) 364-2977 | (855) 242-0802 |
| Amerigroup | (800) 454-3730 | (800) 600-4441 |
| AmeriHealth Caritas | (800) 684-5502 | (800) 684-5502 |
| Louisiana Healthcare Connections | (877) 690-9330 | (866) 595-8133 |
| United HealthCare | (866) 328-3108 | (866) 675-1607 |
| Fee for Service | (800) 648-0790 | (800) 437-9101 |

Please forward this notice to other providers to assist with notification. The Department's ultimate goal is to ensure appropriate and medically necessary utilization of opioids while preventing overdose deaths and decreasing the risk of overutilization and diversion.

JS/MBW/ESF

c: Healthy Louisiana Plans
Melwyn B. Wendt
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