

In the News

Pain Management Medication Program 2018

Starting on **January 1, 2018**, Medical Mutual is implementing a new comprehensive corporate medical policy for pain management medications to help ensure our members' health and safety as well as prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. The goal of this policy is to evaluate the medical necessity of medication therapy for pain management, such as opioids. The changes are outlined in the chart below. To reduce disruption, patients undergoing cancer treatment, with a terminal illness, or in hospice care will be exempt from these changes if this information is present in the medical or prescription claims data available to us. We have already grandfathered members with these conditions based on existing medical claim information in our system. Please note that new patients will need to go through the coverage review process.

DRUG	WHAT IS CHANGING?	WHAT CAN YOU DO?
All opioids when used for 90 days or greater	Will require prior authorization to comply with Ohio Senate Bill 319 and State Medical Board Prescribing Rules	Limit opioid prescriptions to less than 90 days cumulative. If your patient does meet the Rules for extended prescribing, please call Express Scripts to request a coverage review.
Oxycontin (Oxycodone ER) 80 mg	Will require prior authorization due to risk of abuse and requirements for concomitant naloxone prescription.	Evaluate if your patient needs to be on the 80 mg dose of Oxycontin (oxycodone ER). If use is warranted, contact Express Scripts to start a coverage review.
Transmucosal Immediate Release Fentanyl (brand and generic) Examples: Actiq, Abstral, Fentora, Subsys, and Lazanda	Prior authorization will follow FDA indication which is only for pain associated with cancer	If being used for cancer pain, contact Express Scripts to request a coverage review.
Accumulative 200 mg Morphine Equivalent Dose (MED)	Adopting Medicare guidance, patients filling one or more opioids that give a morphine equivalent dose of 200 mg per day or greater will require prior authorization. The look back periods will be 180 days. This is being done to prevent dangerous dosing from multiple prescribers and drugs. For example, 200 MED of hydrocodone/APAP 10/325, is twenty tablets a day. For	Review your patient's opioid prescriptions in OARRS (or respective state's prescription monitoring program) to determine all therapies to determine all therapies and the patient's current Active Cumulative Morphine Equivalent dose (ACME) which is the total MED of all active opioid prescriptions. If dosing is warranted, contact Express Scripts to request a

	oxycodone ER 60 mg twice daily dosing equates to 180 MED.	coverage review.
Soma (carisoprodol)— muscle relaxant	Will require prior authorization. Only short term treatment for acute pain will be approved. Initial approval will be for 30 days if criterion is met to prevent potential abuse	Instead of Soma, prescribe other muscle relaxant options such as: baclofen, cyclobenzaprine, metaxalone, tizanidine, orphenadrine or methocarbamol. If Soma is still needed, contact Express Scripts to request a coverage review.
Benzodiazepines and opioids concomitantly	More than 30 % of opioid overdoses involve benzodiazepines and opioids were associated with 77% of benzodiazepines overdose deaths. To help combat this, benzodiazepines will be assessed during opioid coverage reviews This follows Ohio Senate Bill 319 and CDC rules.	Avoid prescribing benzodiazepines together with opioid prescriptions to reduce your patient's risk of overdose.
Vivitrol (naltrexone) – IM injection	Patients on Vivitrol will be blocked from filling opioid medication	Inform your patients that opioids will not be covered under their insurance after Vivitrol is given. Coverage reviews are available in the following scenarios: For patients undergoing alcohol treatment, opioids will be covered through prior authorization. For patients being treated for substance abuse and the prescriber feels that opioids are needed for acute pain, a coverage review may be started.

If you have a patient that will be impacted by one of these changes, we encourage you to review the necessity of continuing opioid therapy and consider alternative, non-opioid treatment options when appropriate. If continuation is necessary you can request a coverage review by contacting Express Scripts on or after January 1, 2018, by calling 800-753-2851 or submitting your request via electronic prior authorization (visit <https://esrx.com/pa> for more details). Again, for patients undergoing cancer treatment, with a terminal illness, or in hospice care we will grant coverage for pain management medication. Newly diagnosed patients will need to be reviewed through the coverage review process.

The changes noted above will supplement several existing programs that you may have interacted with in the past. These programs are administered by Express Scripts on behalf of Medical Mutual and include:

- Enhanced Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Program – detects and identifies inappropriate use of opioids and other agents with abuse potential and takes meaningful action to protect our members, including locking the member into one pharmacy and one provider for coordination of care.
- RationalMed Program – identifies gaps in care as well as potential issues related to inappropriate use or safety and gives providers actionable alerts.
- Concurrent Drug Utilization Review – identifies drug related problems such as therapeutic duplication, polypharmacy, and drug-drug interactions

We urge you to promptly respond to any investigative requests, alerts, or inquiries that you receive as a result of these programs so that we can coordinate care, prevent misuse and ensure the most appropriate drug therapy for your patients and our members.

If you have addiction concerns about any of your Medical Mutual patients, please know that Medical Mutual supports effective medication-assisted treatments (MAT) for opioid addiction when used in conjunction with psychosocial support. MAT may relieve withdrawal symptoms and cravings, helping to avoid relapse. Medical Mutual covers many substance abuse treatment options, including but not limited to: Suboxone (generic buprenorphine/naloxone) and Zubsolv without prior authorization.

Reasonable quantity limits may exist. Opioid antagonist options such as naltrexone oral tablets and Vivitrol are also formulary for the majority of members. Members may also qualify for opioid addiction treatment medication through their medical benefit.

If you have a patient that needs substance abuse treatment, we suggest the following resources:

- 1) First and foremost they should contact Medical Mutual to discuss their benefit and identify in network providers/facilities. In addition to providers within our usual geographic service area of Ohio, we have a national network that can be accessed when clinically appropriate to do so. Customer Service can be reached by calling 1-800-382-5729 or through www.MedMutual.com.
- 2) Federal government agency Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) through <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>. Members should contact Medical Mutual about their benefit and network status of any provider identified.

Local county community mental health and addiction boards, for example:

- **Cuyahoga County** – Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County Provides referral information 24/7 via a Crisis Line 216-623-6888 and a 24-hour Crisis Text – see <http://www.adamhsc.org/>.
- **Stark County** - Opiate Hotline Offers community information, education, support and connection to services 24/7 at 330-454-HELP (4357). They also have an extensive Medical Professional Opiate Abuse Toolkit that you might find valuable: https://starkmhar.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/12-22-16_Physician-toolkit-final_WEB.pdf.

Where to Go If You Have Questions:

If you have questions about this letter or coverage for your medications, please email Medical Mutual at clinicalpharmacy@medmutual.com or call us at 216-687-7893. Additional information will be available through <https://provider.medmutual.com/>, Tools &Resources, In the News, and search by the article title “Pain Management Medication Program 2018.”