

August 15, 2017

Prior authorization requirements on opioid prescriptions for adult GHP Family members

In response to the current opioid epidemic in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) has directed all Managed Care Organizations to align policies and prior authorization requirements for opioid analgesics with national and state guidelines. These authorization requirements are in accordance with recent legislation and DHS directives aimed at curbing opioid addiction and abuse in the commonwealth.

Effective Sept. 15, 2017, prior authorization will be required for new opioid prescriptions that exceed a 14-day supply for adult GHP Family members (age 18 and older). Any new prescription for a morphine equivalent dose (MED) of 50 – 89 will require pharmacist override or prior authorization, if not overridden by the pharmacist at the point of sale. New prescriptions for a MED of 90 or greater will require prior authorization. All prescriptions for MED of 120 or greater will require prior authorization.

Effective Nov. 1, 2017, all prescriptions for adults for more than a 14-day supply will require prior authorization, and all prescriptions for 50 – 89 MED will require either pharmacist override or prior authorization. All prescriptions for a MED of 90 or greater will require prior authorization. Members currently receiving more than a 14-day supply or 50 – 119 MED will be grandfathered until Nov. 1, 2017.

To request prior authorization, use the GHP Family opioid prior authorization form which will be available through NaviNet.net and the provider section of GHPFamily.com.

Authorizations entered for GHP Family patients with certain conditions

Prior authorizations will be entered for GHP Family members who are currently identified as:

- Being diagnosed with active cancer or in palliative care
- Being diagnosed with sickle cell disease
- Receiving hospice care

Required documentation when requesting prior authorization

Beginning Sept. 15, 2017, the documentation that addresses the following will be required when authorization is requested for opioid prescriptions greater than 14 days for GHP Family members age 18 and older:

- Why a non-opioid alternative is not advised
- Treatment for chronic non-cancer pain when the prescription is written by a pain management specialist or the member has been referred to a pain management specialist
- Prescription for more than a 14-day supply to stabilize an acute medical condition or the member is being tapered off opioids and the duration of treatment is stated
- Attestation that the prescriber will conduct urine drug screening (UDS) per the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) guidelines
- Agreement to evaluate member for risk of opioid use disorder using CAGE-AID or a similar screening tool upon initiation of opioids and every 3 months or as needed
- A plan for the tapering of benzodiazepines or rationale for continued use (if applicable)
- Proof the prescriber has queried the State's Prescription Drug Monitoring System

- Statement showing the prescriber has discussed the risks of addiction and overdose with the member
- Written consent for the prescription from the member on a standardized consent form
- Proof the recipient has been educated on the potential adverse effects of opioid analgesics, including the risk for misuse, abuse and addiction and, if the prescriber determines the member is at risk, that the prescriber has considered prescribing naloxone.

Additional GHP Family resources for combating opioid addiction and abuse

Launched in Oct. 2016, the #HadEnough campaign includes events, programs and projects focused on the awareness, education and prevention of opioid abuse. Visit the #HadEnough resources page at GeisingerHealthPlan.com/hadenough for information on addiction treatment centers and programs available to your GHP Family patients.

If you have any questions regarding opioid prescription authorization, please call the GHP Family pharmacy department at 855-552-6028 (PA Relay: 711) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.