pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETIN

ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE	NUMBER
June 30, 2023	July 10, 2023	*See below

SUBJECT

Prior Authorization of Opioid Use Disorder Treatments – Pharmacy Services

BY

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IMPORTANT REMINDER: All providers must revalidate the Medical Assistance (MA) enrollment of each service location every 5 years. Providers should log into PROMISe to check the revalidation dates of each service location and submit revalidation applications at least 60 days prior to the revalidation dates. Enrollment (revalidation) applications may be found at: https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/PROMISe-Enrollment.aspx.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to issue updated handbook pages that include the requirements for prior authorization and the type of information needed to evaluate the medical necessity of prescriptions for Opioid Use Disorder Treatments submitted for prior authorization.

SCOPE:

This bulletin applies to all licensed pharmacies and prescribers enrolled in the Medical Assistance (MA) Program. The guidelines to determine the medical necessity of Opioid Use Disorder Treatments will be utilized in the fee-for-service and managed care delivery systems. Providers rendering services to MA beneficiaries in the managed care delivery system should address any questions related to the prior authorization of Opioid Use Disorder Treatments to the appropriate managed care organization.

BACKGROUND:

*01-23-18	09-23-18	27-23-12	33-23-18
02-23-11	11-23-11	30-23-15	
03-23-11	14-23-11	31-23-19	
08-23-22	24-23-17	32-23-11	

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

The appropriate toll-free number for your provider type.

Visit the Office of Medical Assistance Programs website at https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Health%20Care%20for%20Providers/Contact-Information-for-Providers.aspx.

The Department of Human Services' (Department) Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board meets to review provider prescribing and dispensing practices for efficacy, safety, and quality and to recommend interventions for prescribers and pharmacists through the Department's Prospective DUR and Retrospective DUR programs.

DISCUSSION:

During the April 26, 2023, meeting, the DUR Board recommended the following revisions to the guidelines to determine medical necessity of prescriptions for Opioid Use Disorder Treatments:

- Revision of the title of the Opioid Dependence Treatments Statewide Preferred Drug List therapeutic class to Opioid Use Disorder Treatments.
- Deletion of the requirement for prior authorization and corresponding medical necessity guidelines for an oral buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatment without naloxone.
- Clarification that oral buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatment refers to sublingual buprenorphine.
- Deletion of the guideline that the beneficiary has documentation that the prescriber or prescriber's delegate conducted a search of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.
- Clarification that the guidelines for doses of sublingual buprenorphine greater than 24 mg/day apply to the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder.
- Deletion of the following guidelines for doses of sublingual buprenorphine greater than 24 mg/day:
    - Whether the beneficiary has documentation of an evaluation to determine the recommended level of care.
    - Whether the beneficiary has documentation of participation in a substance abuse or behavioral health counseling or treatment program or an addictions recovery program.
    - Whether the beneficiary has a recent urine drug screen for drugs with the potential for abuse.
- Addition of a guideline for doses of sublingual buprenorphine greater than 24 mg/day that the beneficiary has an unsatisfactory clinical response (e.g., uncontrolled withdrawal or cravings) at the current quantity limit.
- Deletion of the section related to a 5-day supply of an Opioid Use Disorder Treatment.

The revisions to the guidelines to determine medical necessity of prescriptions for Opioid Use Disorder Treatments submitted for prior authorization, as recommended by the DUR Board, were subject to public review and comment and subsequently approved for implementation by the Department.

PROCEDURE:

The procedures for prescribers to request prior authorization of Opioid Use Disorder Treatments are located in SECTION I of the Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook. The Department will take into account the elements specified in the clinical review guidelines (which are included in the provider handbook pages in the SECTION II chapter

related to Opioid Use Disorder Treatments) when reviewing the prior authorization request to determine medical necessity.

As set forth in 55 Pa. Code § 1101.67(a), the procedures described in the handbook pages must be followed to ensure appropriate and timely processing of prior authorization requests for drugs and products that require prior authorization.

ATTACHMENTS:

Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook - Updated pages

RESOURCES:

Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook – SECTION I
Pharmacy Prior Authorization General Requirements
https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Pharmacy-Services/Pages/Pharmacy-Prior-Authorization-General-Requirements.aspx

Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook – SECTION II
Pharmacy Prior Authorization Guidelines
https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Pharmacy-Services/Pages/Clinical-Guidelines.aspx

I. Requirements for Prior Authorization of Opioid Use Disorder Treatments

A. Prescriptions That Require Prior Authorization

Prescriptions for Opioid Use Disorder Treatments that meet any of the following conditions must be prior authorized:

1. A non-preferred Opioid Use Disorder Treatment. See the Preferred Drug List (PDL) for the list of preferred Opioid Use Disorder Treatments at: https://papdl.com/preferred-drug-list.

2. An Opioid Use Disorder Treatment with a prescribed quantity that exceeds the quantity limit. The list of drugs that are subject to quantity limits, with accompanying quantity limits, is available at: https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Pharmacy-Services/Pages/Quantity-Limits-and-Daily-Dose-Limits.aspx.

   REMINDER: A prescription for a benzodiazepine, opioid analgesic, controlled substance sedative hypnotic, or carisoprodol requires prior authorization when a beneficiary has a concurrent prescription for a buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatment. Refer to the specific individual handbook chapters (e.g., Analgesics, Opioid Long-Acting, Analgesics, Opioid Short-Acting, Anticonvulsants, Anxiolytics, Skeletal Muscle Relaxants, Sedative Hypnotics) for corresponding prior authorization guidelines.

   REMINDER: A prescription for an opioid analgesic requires prior authorization when a beneficiary has a concurrent prescription for Vivitrol.

B. Review of Documentation for Medical Necessity

In evaluating a request for prior authorization of a prescription for an Opioid Use Disorder Treatment, the determination of whether the requested prescription is medically necessary will take into account whether the beneficiary:

1. Is prescribed the Opioid Use Disorder Treatment for treatment of a diagnosis that is indicated in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved package labeling OR a medically accepted indication; **AND**

2. For Lucemyra (lofexidine), is prescribed a dose and duration of therapy that are consistent with FDA-approved package labeling, nationally recognized compendia, or peer-reviewed medical literature; **AND**

3. For a non-preferred Opioid Use Disorder Treatment, **one** of the following:

   a. For a sublingual buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatment, has a history of therapeutic failure of or a contraindication or an intolerance to the preferred sublingual buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatments,
   b. For an alpha-2 adrenergic agonist Opioid Use Disorder Treatment, has a history of

therapeutic failure of or a contraindication or an intolerance to the preferred alpha-2 adrenergic agonist Opioid Use Disorder Treatments,

c. For a non-sublingual buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatment, has a history of therapeutic failure of or a contraindication or an intolerance to the preferred non-sublingual buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatments;

AND

4. If a prescription for an Opioid Use Disorder Treatment is for a quantity that exceeds the quantity limit, the determination of whether the prescription is medically necessary will also take into account the guidelines set forth in the Quantity Limits Chapter; **AND**

5. For a diagnosis of Opioid Use Disorder, if a prescription for a sublingual buprenorphine Opioid Use Disorder Treatment is for a daily dose that exceeds 24 mg/day, **all** of the following:

   a. Whether the beneficiary is prescribed a daily dose consistent with medically accepted prescribing practices and standards of care,
   b. Whether the beneficiary has an unsatisfactory clinical response (e.g., uncontrolled withdrawal or cravings) at the current quantity limit,
   c. For a beneficiary already established on buprenorphine, whether the beneficiary has a recent urine drug screen that is positive for buprenorphine and norbuprenorphine.

   NOTE: If the beneficiary does not meet the clinical review guidelines and quantity limit guidelines listed above but, in the professional judgment of the physician reviewer, the services are medically necessary to meet the medical needs of the beneficiary, the request for prior authorization will be approved.

C. Clinical Review Process

Prior authorization personnel will review the request for prior authorization and apply the clinical guidelines in Section B. above to assess the medical necessity of a prescription for an Opioid Use Disorder Treatment. If the guidelines in Section B. are met, the reviewer will prior authorize the prescription. If the guidelines are not met, the prior authorization request will be referred to a physician reviewer for a medical necessity determination. Such a request for prior authorization will be approved when, in the professional judgment of the physician reviewer, the services are medically necessary to meet the medical needs of the beneficiary.

D. Dose and Duration of Therapy

Requests for prior authorization of Lucemyra (lofexidine) will be approved for a dose and duration of therapy consistent with the FDA-approved package labeling, nationally recognized compendia, or peer-reviewed medical literature.

E. References

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