

## Clinical opioid policy reminder

**Summary:** This is a reminder that on November 1, 2017, a new Health Care Authority (HCA) clinical policy pertaining to opioid prescriptions took effect for Medicaid members in Washington State. The policy limits opioids to a quantity of 18 dosages (tablets or capsules or 5-ml dose of liquid formulation) per prescription for children (20 years old and younger) and 42 dosages (tablets or capsules) per prescription for adults (21 and older).

The policy limits both short-acting and long-acting opioids to no more than 42 calendar days of opioid use within a rolling 90-day period. Use of any opioid for more than 42 days within a 90-day period is considered chronic use of opioids and requires prior authorization with a signed prescriber chronic opioid attestation. Please note, a new prior authorization request with a new signed prescriber chronic opioid attestation is required to be resubmitted after 12 months.

Opioids included in this policy are drugs which contain the following opioid ingredients: codeine, fentanyl, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, meperidine, morphine, oxycodone, oxymorphone, tapentadol and tramadol. This policy does not apply to medication-assisted therapy, such as Suboxone® and methadone.

Patients who are undergoing active cancer treatment or who are in hospice, palliative care or end-of-life care are exempt from this policy. New members within the first 120 days of membership in the health plan are exempt from the policy.

### Expedited authorization codes

Expedited authorization codes are available to provide immediate overrides at the pharmacy when patients or prescriptions meet certain criteria. Overrides are available at the pharmacy for:

- Patients in active cancer treatment, hospice care, palliative care or other end-of-life care.
- When prescribers indicate *Exempt* on the prescription for acute use of an opioid when member is not receiving chronic opioid treatment.
- Members who are chronic opioid users. The pharmacy can dispense a seven-day supply while requesting the attestation from the prescriber.
- New members within the first 120 days of membership in the health plan are exempt from the policy, and there is an expedited override code available as well.

The prior authorization form with provider opioid attestation can be found by going to <https://providers.amerigroup.com/WA> > Provider Resources & Documents > Pharmacy > Opioid PA with Attestation Form.

The *HCA Clinical Opioid Policy* can be located at <https://www.hca.wa.gov/billers-providers-partners/programs-and-services/opioids>.

**What if I need assistance?**

If you have questions about this communication or need assistance with any other item, contact your local Network Relations consultant or call Provider Services toll free at 1-800-454-3730.