

Apple Health Second Opinion Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Second Opinion Network (SON)?

Seattle Children's Hospital provides second-opinion medication reviews when requested by Washington Apple Health (Medicaid), administered by the Health Care Authority (HCA), when a prescription for a medication exceeds the Pediatric Mental Health guidelines.

What is the Partnership Access Line (PAL)?

Seattle Children's Hospital supports primary care providers (doctors, nurse practitioners and physician assistants) with questions about mental health care such as diagnostic clarification, medication adjustment or treatment planning. This is a resource for prescribers to use for treatment guidance. For Apple Health Medicaid clients, prescribers may use the PAL resource when the SON review process has not been started.

What are the Pediatric Mental Health guidelines?

They are a set of guidelines to ensure safe and effective use of medications in patients in WA up to age 18. The Pediatric Mental Health Advisory Group and the Drug Utilization Review Board establish the guidelines. These guidelines can be found at the [Apple Health Second Opinion webpage](#).

How is a SON review initiated?

The SON review process starts when a prescription is sent to a community pharmacy. If the prescription exceeds the Pediatric Mental Health guidelines, the claim may reject indicating that the pharmacy staff or prescriber must contact the client's enrolled Apple Health Fee-For Service (FFS) or Managed Care (MCO) plan to initiate the mandatory review process. In some instances, the claim will continue to pay and the client's plan will reach out to the prescriber for more information.

May I call Seattle Children's to schedule a review before it has been initiated by the health plan?

No. Seattle Children's must receive the request from the HCA, with required documentation, prior to scheduling a review. Upon receipt, Seattle Children's program staff will reach out to the prescriber(s) office to schedule, within 2 business days of receiving the request.

How long does the SON review consult take?

Most scheduled reviews are completed within 15 min; however, complicated cases may take longer.

Who do I contact for status updates or questions about the process?

Apple Health Clients should call the following:

Amerigroup:	1-800-454-3730
Community Health Plan of Washington:	1-800-440-1561
Coordinated Care of Washington:	1-877-644-4613
Molina:	1-800-869-7165
United Healthcare:	1-877-542-8997
Medical Assistance Customer Service Center (for Fee-for-Service):	1-800-562-3022

If you are a prescriber, please contact the Second Opinion Coordinator at 360-725-1312.

If there has not been a change in therapy, is a second opinion review needed?

There are many reasons medications may need a SON review. The client may be new to Apple Health Medicaid, medication thresholds may have been updated or changed, and approvals may have been created for a limited time period.

My patient is out of medication. How do they get medication while going through the SON review?

If the patient has been receiving the medication at the same dose, continuation fills will be given until the review is complete.

If the medication is new, and is an antipsychotic, child in crisis criteria may apply. Providers can see the [Expedited Authorization list \(EA\) list](#) or call the client's enrolled Apple Health Managed Care plan.

The [emergency fill policy](#) may also apply. The policy allows the dispensing pharmacist to use their professional judgment to meet a client's urgent medical need.

How long between the review phone call and the approval at the pharmacy?

The process can take a few days. The recommendations are returned to the HCA and reviewed by a Prescription Drug Program (PDP) staff member. The HCA applies program rules, documents the recommendations and creates authorizations when appropriate. If the client is enrolled in an Apple Health Managed Care Plan, the HCA applies program rules, documents the recommendations, and sends decisions to the plan indicating what should be authorized. The plan then sets up the appropriate authorizations and shares the recommendations with the prescribers.

If a review was previously completed, is a new review still required?

If the medication therapy is still within previously recommended thresholds, a new review is not needed. If the medication therapy exceeds previously recommended thresholds, a new review will need to be completed.

Will I receive a copy of the Second Opinion consultation?

The participating prescriber will receive a copy of the consultation after it is complete and all needed authorizations are created. If a copy of the Second Opinion consultation is not received within five business days, the prescriber may call the client's enrolled Apple Health plan to request a copy.

What if I already spoke to a psychiatrist on the PAL line regarding this medication and dosing?

Respond to the SON request with the patient's records, including a copy of PAL follow-up note. It may be helpful to note on the coversheet that this has been included.