

Opioid Clinical Policy

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Policy

Acute use of opioids for the treatment of non-cancer, non-palliative care, non-hospice, non-end of life pain (applies to both short-acting and long-acting formulations):

- 1) Grandfathering criteria:
 - a) Patients who have filled at least one opioid prescription in three of the last four months (other than methadone) will be grandfathered. The attestation is not needed for these patients.
 - i) The dose, quantity, and 42-day supply limits do not apply.
 - ii) These patients may be identified electronically by looking back at claims data prior to January 2, 2018.
- 2) In general, only short-acting opioids will be approved for acute use. Long-acting opioids for acute use will be approved only under the exception criteria listed in (4) below.
- 3) Short and long-acting opioid prescriptions are covered without prior authorization to treat non-cancer, non-palliative care, non-hospice, and non-end of life related pain when the limits listed in (3a) and (3b) below are followed or when one of the exceptions listed in (4) applies. Limits apply as follows:
 - a) For short acting opioids only:
 - i) A quantity limit of 18 dosages per prescription for children (≤ 20 years of age); [Note: Prescriber indicating EXEMPT overrides quantity limit] **OR**
 - ii) A quantity limit of 42 dosages per prescription for adults (≥ 21 years of age); [Note: Prescriber indicating EXEMPT overrides the quantity]; **AND**
 - b) For both long and short acting opioids:
 - i) 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. See the **chronic use of opioids section** below;
- 4) **Exceptions** (Quantity limits in Table 1 below apply) (4a and 4b require separate codes):
 - a) Patient with a diagnosis or pharmacy claim for active cancer treatment, hospice, palliative care, or end-of-life care and pharmacy documents this on the prescription and submits the claim with an **expedited authorization code** used for this criteria; [Note: quantity limits do not apply]; **OR**
 - b) Provider wrote/typed "EXEMPT" on the prescription or the pharmacist has contacted the provider and the provider confirmed verbally the patient has an "EXEMPT" medical condition.
 - i) By indicating "EXEMPT" the provider is attesting that the patient has a medically necessary need that requires the prescribed long or short acting opioid (other than pain related to active cancer, hospice, palliative care, or end-of-life care) and it is documented in the medical record. Use of opioids not to exceed 42 calendar days within a rolling 90-day period. Greater than 42 days require an attestation (see 6).

- ii) The pharmacy may submit the claim with the **expedited authorization code** used for this criteria; **OR**
 - c) New members are exempted for the first 120 days of enrollment.
 - i) Documentation from the pharmacist or prescriber is not required
 - ii) Quantity limits and 42 day supply limit do not apply; **OR**
 - d) Current prior authorization on file.
- 5) Opioid prescriptions exceeding the limits in (3a) and (3b) that do not have an exception listed in (4a), (4c), or (4d) are not authorized unless provider submits attestation.

Chronic use of opioids for the treatment of non-cancer pain (applies to both short-acting and long-acting formulations)

- 6) Use of opioids for more than 42 days may be authorized in 12-month intervals or to the provider's indicated expiration date ["End Date"] when the prescriber signs the attestation below.

Attestation:

"I [Doctor's Name] attest that all of the below criteria are met, or there is documentation in the chart for why one or more are not applicable:

- a) The patient has an on-going clinical need for chronic opioid use at the prescribed dose (more than 42 days per 90-day calendar period) that is documented in the medical record.
- b) The patient is using appropriate non-opioid medications, and/or non-pharmacologic therapies; **OR**
- c) The patient has tried and failed non-opioid medications and non-pharmacologic therapies for the treatment of this pain condition; **AND**
- d) For long-acting opioids, the patient must be using or had trials of short-acting opioid therapy for at least 42 days; **OR**
 - i) The reason for inadequate response to short-acting opioid therapy is documented in the medical record; **OR**
 - ii) Justification of beginning an opiate naïve patient on a long-acting opioid is documented in the medical record;
- e) The provider has recorded baseline and ongoing assessments of measurable, objective pain scores and function scores. These should be tracked serially in order to demonstrate clinically meaningful improvements in pain and function; **AND**
- f) The patient has been screened for mental health disorders, substance use disorder, naloxone use; **AND**
- g) The provider will conduct periodic urine drug screens; **AND**
- h) The provider has checked the PDMP for any other opioid use and concurrent use of benzodiazepines and other sedatives; **AND**
- i) The provider has discussed with the patient the realistic goals of pain management therapy and has discussed discontinuation as an option during treatment; **AND**
- j) The provider confirms that the patient understands and accepts these conditions and the patient has signed a pain contract or informed consent document.

By signing this attestation, I hereby certify that the above information is true, accurate, and complete. That the requested treatment is medically necessary, does not exceed the medical needs of the member, and is clinically supported in the member's medical record [Insert Attestation End Date].

Definitions:

- **Short-acting opioid:** an opioid that is FDA-approved to manage pain severe enough to require opioid treatment and for which alternative treatment options are inadequate (includes tramadol and tapentadol; excludes trans-mucosal fentanyl and all buprenorphine products).
- **Long-acting opioid:** an extended release opioid that is FDA-approved to manage pain severe enough to require daily, around-the-clock, long-term opioid treatment for opioid-tolerant patients and for which alternative treatment options are inadequate (includes fentanyl patches and tramadol ER; excludes methadone and buprenorphine patches).
- **Dosage:** One dosage equals one tablet, one capsule, one suppository, or 5 ml.
- **Opioid:** Drugs containing the following ingredients
 - ♦ Codeine
 - ♦ Fentanyl
 - ♦ Hydrocodone
 - ♦ Hydromorphone
 - ♦ Meperidine
 - ♦ Morphine
 - ♦ Oxycodone
 - ♦ Oxymorphone
 - ♦ Tapentadol
 - ♦ Tramadol
- **MED:** Morphine equivalent doses per the calculator published on the Washington State Agency Medical Directors' Group website (<http://agencymeddirectors.wa.gov/opioiddosing.asp>).

See Table 1: Quantity and Days' Supply Limits, next page

Table 1: Quantity and Days' Supply Limits

ACUTE USE			
		Short acting opioids	Long acting opioid
Standard limits when exceptions are not met	Quantity Limits for children ≤ 20 years old	18 tablets or capsules, or 90 ml per prescription	Not allowed for acute use unless exempt
	Quantity Limits for adults ≥ 21 years old	42 tablets or capsules, or 210 ml per prescription	
Limits when exceptions are met	Dosage	No MED limits at this time.	
	Day Supply	30 days maximum in a single fill. Use of opioids not to exceed 42 calendar days within a rolling 90-day period. Greater than 42 days require attestation or prior authorization.	
CHRONIC USE			
Limits	Dosage	No MED limit at this time.	
	Day Supply	30 day supply	

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