



Pharmacy Preferred Newsletter August 2020

Single Preferred Drug List Update (Effective 7/1/2020)

Since May 1, 2020 137 drug classes have gone live. The [Single Preferred Drug List](#) will tell you the formulary status of medications for patients on the Apple Health plan. Moving forward this list will be updated quarterly beginning 10/1/2020. There is now an automated process for formulary updates between HCA and all MCOs.

Medical Benefit drugs may be included in the PDL

Adherence to Antipsychotic Medications for Individuals with Schizophrenia (SAA)

CHPW is dedicated to working with you to provide quality care for your patients and our members. This month we are spotlighting the NCQA HEDIS initiative Adherence to Antipsychotic Medications for Individuals with Schizophrenia (SAA). This measure is defined as:

- Assesses adults 19–64 years of age who have schizophrenia and were dispensed and remained on an antipsychotic medication for at least 80% of their treatment period.

Clinical and psychosocial factors make it challenging for patients with schizophrenia to take their medications as prescribed. Not taking medications as prescribed is highly correlated with relapse and/or hospitalization for these patients. This results in poor clinical and functional outcomes and increased health care costs for these patients and society.

Multimodal approaches that address each patient's specific adherence challenges will have the greatest impact on patient adherence. The following are steps that you can take to improve the adherence of patients with schizophrenia prescribed antipsychotics^{1,2}.

Assessing adherence: For patients with schizophrenia it is important to understand their perspectives on the importance of medications and adherence. Ask more open-ended questions that may make patients more comfortable acknowledging when they are not taking medications as prescribed:

- Why are you prescribed your medication(s)? What do they treat?
- Who thinks you should take your medication? Who thinks you should not take it?
- What reminds you to take your medication? How many tablets do you take?
- How is do you benefit from taking your medication? Do you feel that we understand your concerns about treatment?
- What side effects are you experiencing from your medication?

Shared decision making: Since most therapies have similar levels of efficacy, medications should be chosen based on their side effect profile. To minimize discontinuation due to adverse reactions, select therapies where the patient would consider the side effects to be tolerable.

Long acting injectable (LAI): Guidelines recommend considering LAIs early in treatment. These should be offered to appropriate patients after the first episode of schizophrenia since it prevents future relapse. The following LAIs are preferred for adults with Schizophrenia.

- INVEGA SUSTENNA & INVEGA TRINZA
- RISPERDAL CONSTA
- HALOPERIDOL DECANOATE
- FLUPHENAZINE DECANOATE
- ABILIFY MAINTENA & ARISTADA

Psychoeducation: Psychotherapy and educational sessions on improving adherence behavior have

been shown to be effective. This can include cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, and skill building interventions.

CHPW Initiatives: In order to aid our members with adherence, CHPW performs outreach to remind patients to refill their medications. 90-day supplies are also offered to members when appropriate in order to help patients take their medications as prescribed. This is done via text reminders, automated and live pharmacy technician outreach. Members are given the opportunity to speak with a CHPW Clinical Pharmacist about any medication-related concerns.

References

1. Haddad PM, Brain C, Scott J. Nonadherence with antipsychotic medication in schizophrenia: challenges and management strategies. *Patient Relat Outcome Meas.* 2014;5:43-62. Published 2014 Jun 23.
2. Kane JM, Correll CU. Optimizing treatment choices to improve adherence and outcomes in schizophrenia. *J Clin Psychiatry.* 2019;80(5):1N18031AH1C
3. Remington G, Addington D, Honer W, Ismail Z, Raedler T, Teehan M. Guidelines for the Pharmacotherapy of Schizophrenia in Adults. *Can J Psychiatry.* 2017;62(9):604-616.

COVID-19 Updates

(As of 8/05/2020)

All of the policy and procedure changes put in place for the COVID-19 pandemic will remain in place until further notice. The following is a brief summary of changes that have been made by CHPW and the state to ensure continuity of care during this pandemic.

Testing: CHPW will pay for COVID-19 testing. Billing codes have been developed based on the HCA and CMS reimbursement rates. More info - [CHPW - COVID-19 FAQs and Provider Bulletins](#)

Policy PM 514: March 2 CHPW implemented emergency procedures, which will remain in place. Per this policy, pharmacies can override the “refill to soon” by submitting the clarification code 13.

The following COVID-19 related formulary changes are still in place:

- Sublocade – no prior authorization but max monthly dose of 300mg
- Buprenorphine monotherapy – 7-day fill with expedited authorization for pregnant clients
- Hydroxychloroquine – 60-day supply in single fill for the next 6 months
 - Does not apply to patients established/continuing current dose
- Azithromycin - 250 mg tablets, limited to 6 every 30 days, 500mg tablets, limited to 14 every 30 days

Questions? Pharmacy Help Desk: 1-800-922-1557

[Recommendations & resources from the DOH](#)

Remote Monitoring and Health Connect 360

As telemedicine becomes more commonplace, you may have patients that need remote monitoring.

Health Connect 360 is a program available to Medicare patients. This program is aimed for improving outcomes for patients with chronic conditions. Free remote monitoring blood pressure monitors, pulmonary medication monitoring devices, weight scale, and blood glucose monitors are available to patients enrolled in Health Connect 360. To refer any Medicare member who is in need of additional support email pharmacyr@chpw.org.

Continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) devices continue to be available under the pharmacy benefit for Medicare members. CGM devices are now also available for Medicaid members. Devices such as Dexcom and FreeStyle Libre are available to those that match our medical criteria and align with Medicaid Health Technology Assessment guidance.

Making Connections

We welcome your feedback and future topic ideas.

Email us at: PharmacyR@chpw.org