



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
www.mass.gov/masshealth

MassHealth
Managed Care Entity Bulletin 41
September 2020

TO: MassHealth Accountable Care Partnership Plans and Managed Care Organizations

FROM: Amanda Cassel Kraft, Acting Medicaid Director

RE: Updated Pharmacy Coverage Policies

Background

MassHealth's mission is to improve the health outcomes of our diverse members and their families by providing access to integrated health care services that sustainably and equitably promote health, well-being, independence and quality of life. In support of that mission, MassHealth provides broad coverage of medically necessary health care services to its members.

In response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, MassHealth had announced certain policy changes to provide greater flexibility in providing patient care to MassHealth members. In light of changing conditions, with this bulletin, MassHealth is ending the policy changes listed below that were added in [MCE Bulletin 22](#), consistent with Pharmacy Facts #150. All other requirements set forth in [MCE Bulletin 22](#) remain effective for the duration of the Governor's March 10, 2020, Declaration of a State of Emergency within the Commonwealth due to COVID-19.

This bulletin contains updated policies for Accountable Care Partnership Plans (ACPPs) and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). These policies align with certain coverage and payment policies of MassHealth's Fee-for-Service program, Primary Care Clinician (PCC) Plan, and Primary Care Accountable Care Organizations relating to pharmacy services, referrals, and payment.

This bulletin does not apply to SCOs, One Care Plans, and the behavioral health vendor.

MassHealth ACPPs and MCOs should notify their provider network of these changes as appropriate, consistent with the plan's current business practices.

Early Refills

In [MCE Bulletin 22](#), MassHealth implemented the following policy change.

"MassHealth ACPPs and MCOs must allow early refills of existing prescriptions for drugs as long as at least one refill remains on the prescription."

Effective September 14, 2020, MassHealth ACPPs and MCOs are no longer required to allow early refills of existing prescriptions for drugs. ACPPs and MCOs will still need to provide early overrides when medically necessary or on a case by case basis.

Prior Authorization on Certain Therapeutic Classes

In [MCE Bulletin 22](#), MassHealth implemented the following policy change.

"MassHealth ACPPs and MCOs must remove Prior Authorization (PA), if any, on the following drugs and drug classes:

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Drugs and Therapeutic classes to have PA removed:

- Aminoglycoside Agents Inhaled
- Antibiotics – Oral and Injectable
- Antifungals – Oral and Injectable
- Respiratory Agents, Oral and Inhaled
- Sublocade

MassHealth also strongly encourages ACPPs and MCOs to reconsider any PA requirements that may be difficult to achieve or unrealistic to attempt during this state of emergency (e.g., step therapy which requires medications that cause systemic immunosuppression). Given that members are asked to remain home when possible, this includes any lab requirements needed for approval or recertification of a prescription.”

Effective September 14, 2020, MassHealth ACPPs and MCOs are no longer required to remove PA requirements on the drugs listed above, with the exception of Sublocade. Prior Authorization requirements relating to Sublocade must remain removed.

Effective September 14, 2020, MassHealth is also no longer providing the above guidance to ACPPs and MCOs regarding step therapy and lab requirements, but does continue to encourage ACPPs and MCOs to offer flexibilities when appropriate during the state of emergency.

Extension for Soon-to-be Expired PAs

In [MCE Bulletin 22](#), MassHealth implemented the following policy change.

“MassHealth ACPPs and MCOs must allow an extension of 60 days for any drug prior authorizations due to expire in the next 30 days [from March 27, 2020]. Maintenance medications should be prioritized for extensions.”

MassHealth is no longer requiring ACPPs and MCOs to allow extensions of 60 days for any drug prior authorizations due to expire.

MassHealth Website

For all COVID-19 pharmacy-related updates, please visit the new “COVID-19 Pharmacy Program Emergency Response” page on the MassHealth website at <https://masshealthdruglist.ehs.state.ma.us/MHDL/>

This bulletin is available on the [MassHealth Provider Bulletins](#) web page.

To sign up to receive email alerts when MassHealth issues new bulletins and transmittal letters, send a blank email to join-masshealth-provider-pubs@listserv.state.ma.us. No text in the body or subject line is needed.

Questions

If you have any questions about the information in this bulletin, please contact the MassHealth Customer Service Center at (800) 841-2900, email your inquiry to providersupport@mahealth.net, or fax your inquiry to (617) 988-8974.