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Important Updates to MaineCare Coverage and Prior Authorization Criteria for Buprenorphine for Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder July 16, 2021

Dear Medicaid Provider,

Effective July 15, 2021, and in partnership with the Maine Opioid Response Clinical Advisory Committee, MaineCare is updating its coverage criteria and Prior Authorization (PA) process for buprenorphine for the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). The Maine Opioid Response Clinical Advisory Committee is a group of approximately 30 leaders in Substance Use Disorder (SUD) prevention, treatment and harm reduction in Maine and includes both prescribers and pharmacists. With their input, MaineCare has made these updates to its coverage criteria to reflect best clinical practice in the use of Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT) for OUD and to further its efforts to reduce barriers to care and increase access to life-saving medications for the treatment of OUD.

Key changes to the MaineCare coverage criteria and PA processes include the following:

- Buprenorphine induction period changes:
 - Induction period is now considered to be 30 days (previously was 60 days)
 - Max buprenorphine dose is 24 mg/day for up to 30 days of induction period (previously was 32 mg/day)
 - Buprenorphine induction doses of up to 24mg/day will be allowed for multiple induction periods per year, during which prescribers can write for a maximum of 24 mg daily for up to 30 days without requiring a PA.
- For members who are pregnant, a Prior Authorization (PA) will not be required for buprenorphine monotherapy in doses up to 16 mg/day when the prescriber notes a pregnancy diagnosis noted on the prescription
- PAs for buprenorphine will no longer be required when a provider prescribes a concomitant opioid medication for the treatment of acute pain.
- The “SC” (Strength Change) override code can be used with an active PA to titrate a member’s dose from once daily to twice daily dosing. This new override eliminates the need to submit a new PA request.

Reminders of current coverage criteria:

- MaineCare preferred products for buprenorphine include brand name Suboxone films and generic buprenorphine/naloxone combination tablets or films. The prescriber must note a diagnosis of either Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or Substance Use Disorder (SUD) on the prescription, and the pharmacy must submit the claim with either “62” or “OA” codes.
- MaineCare covers maximum maintenance dose of buprenorphine up to 16 mg/day; requests for dosing higher than 16mg outside of the 30D induction period will require a PA.

Please also see the FAQ on MaineCare’s Coverage of Suboxone Treatment.

For questions, contact the Change Healthcare Pharmacy Help Desk at 1-888-420-9711. MaineCare providers can also send inquiries via email to PBA_helpdesk@changehealthcare.com.

Thank you for your commitment to serving MaineCare members.