

ISSUE DATE May 30, 2014	EFFECTIVE DATE June 2, 2014	NUMBER *See below
SUBJECT Prior Authorization of Hepatitis C Agents - Pharmacy Services		BY  Vincent D. Gordon, Deputy Secretary Office of Medical Assistance Programs

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to:

1. Inform providers that the Department of Public Welfare (Department) is adding sofosbuvir (Solvaldi) and simeprevir (Olysio) to the list of Hepatitis C Agents that require prior authorization.
2. Issue handbook pages that include instructions on how to request prior authorization of prescriptions for Hepatitis C Agents, including the type of medical information needed to evaluate requests for medical necessity.

SCOPE:

This bulletin applies to all licensed pharmacies and prescribers enrolled in the Medical Assistance (MA) Program and providing services in the fee-for-service (FFS) delivery system, including pharmacy services to residents of long term care facilities.

BACKGROUND:

The Department's Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board meets semi-annually to review provider prescribing and dispensing practices for efficacy, safety, and quality and to recommend interventions for prescribers and pharmacists through the Department's Prospective Drug Use Review (ProDUR) and Retrospective Drug Use Review (RetroDUR) programs.

*01-14-22	09-14-17	27-14-15	33-14-16
02-14-14	11-14-14	30-14-14	
03-14-17	14-14-14	31-14-20	
08-14-18	24-14-14	32-14-14	

<p>COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:</p> <p>The appropriate toll free number for your provider type</p> <p>Visit the Office of Medical Assistance Programs Web site at http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/provider/healthcaremedicalassistance/index.htm</p>
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DISCUSSION:

During the March 25, 2014 meeting, the DUR Board recommended that the Department require prior authorization of sofosbuvir (Solvaldi) and simeprevir (Olysio). While both drugs have been described as breakthrough hepatitis C treatments, the medically-accepted standards of care are still evolving, and the cost is generating significant discussion and debate nationwide. The DUR Board recommended guidelines to determine medical necessity to identify appropriate candidates for treatment and appropriate utilization based upon the limited evidence-based, clinically-reliable treatment guidelines available at this point in time. The requirement for prior authorization and the guidelines to determine medical necessity of Hepatitis C Agents, as recommended by the DUR Board, were subject to public review and comment, and subsequently approved for implementation by the Department. The requirements for prior authorization and clinical review guidelines to determine the medical necessity of Hepatitis C Agents are included in the attached updated provider handbook pages.

PROCEDURE:

The procedures for prescribers to request prior authorization of Hepatitis C Agents are located in SECTION I of the Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook. The Department will take into account the elements specified in the clinical review guidelines (which are included in the provider handbook pages in the SECTION II chapters related to Hepatitis C Agents) when reviewing the prior authorization request to determine medical necessity.

As set forth in 55 Pa. Code § 1101.67(a), the procedures described in the handbook pages must be followed to ensure appropriate and timely processing of prior authorization requests for drugs that require prior authorization.

ATTACHMENTS:

Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook - Updated pages

SECTION II
Hepatitis C Agents