

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETIN

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| ISSUE DATE October 20, 2008 | EFFECTIVE DATE November 12, 2008 | NUMBER 99-08-15 |
| SUBJECT Non-Payment of Antidementia Drugs for Children Less Than 18 Years of Age | |  Michael Nardone, Deputy Secretary Office of Medical Assistance Programs |

PURPOSE:

To inform providers that effective November 12, 2008, the Medical Assistance (MA) Program will not make payment for Antidementia drugs for children less than 18 years of age.

BACKGROUND:

Federal law allows the Department of Public Welfare (Department) to exclude coverage of an otherwise covered outpatient drug if the “prescribed use is not for a medically accepted indication”. 42 U.S.C. § 1396r-8.(d)(1)(B)(i). The term “medically accepted indication”, as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 1396r-8(k)(6), means any use for a covered outpatient drug which is approved under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act [21 U.S.C. 301 et seq] or the use of which is supported by one or more citations included or approved for inclusion in any of the following compendia:

1. American Hospital formulary Service Drug Information;
2. United States Pharmacopeia-Drug Information;
3. The DRUGDEX Information System

During a recent retrospective review of paid claims data, the Department identified claims for Antidementia drugs prescribed for children under 18 years of age. The Department presented the data to the Drug Use Review (DUR) Board as part of the Board's retrospective DUR activities. The DUR Board determined that the prescribed use of Antidementia drugs for children is not supported by any of the compendia listed above or the peer-reviewed medical literature and recommended that the Department discontinue payment for Antidementia drugs for children less than 18 years of age.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

Visit the Office of Medical Assistance Programs Web site at www.dpw.state.pa.us/omap

DISCUSSION:

The Department does not make payment for legend and nonlegend drugs whose prescribed use is not for a medically accepted indication. The Department does not consider the prescribed use of Antidementia drugs for children less than 18 years of age to be a medically accepted indication and will stop payment effective November 12, 2008.

PROCEDURE:

The Department sent MA recipients who are under age 18 and who have a recent history of a claim for an Antidementia drug a notice informing them that their Antidementia medication, the name of which is identified in the notice, will no longer be covered by the MA Program. Each recipient was instructed to contact the prescribing provider and not to stop taking the medication until talking with the prescribing provider. In addition to this notice, if you are aware of any patient under age 18 for whom you prescribed an Antidementia drug, you may want your office staff to initiate a contact to ensure that there is no interruption in treatment and to ensure continuity of care.