

<b>ISSUE DATE</b>  October 18, 2019	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>  January 1, 2020	<b>NUMBER</b>  *See below
<b>SUBJECT</b>  Prior Authorization of Histamine 2 (H2) Receptor Blockers – Pharmacy Services		<b>BY</b>    Sally A. Kozak, Deputy Secretary Office of Medical Assistance Programs

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** All providers must revalidate the Medical Assistance (MA) enrollment of each service location every 5 years. Providers should log into PROMISE to check the revalidation dates of each service location and submit revalidation applications at least 60 days prior to the revalidation dates. Enrollment (revalidation) applications may be found at:  
[http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/promise/enrollmentinformation/S\\_001994](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/promise/enrollmentinformation/S_001994).

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this bulletin is to issue updated handbook pages that include the requirements for prior authorization and the type of information needed to evaluate the medical necessity of prescriptions for Histamine 2 (H2) Receptor Blockers submitted for prior authorization.

**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 delivery system. Providers rendering services in the MA managed care delivery system should address any questions related to H2 Receptor Blockers to the appropriate managed care organization.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

The Department of Human Services (Department) is updating the medical necessity guidelines for H2 Receptor Blockers to update the format of the guidelines. There are no other

*01-19-96	09-19-92	27-19-90	33-19-92
02-19-90	11-19-89	30-19-88	
03-19-89	14-19-88	31-19-95	
08-19-98	24-19-90	32-19-88	

**COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:**

The appropriate toll-free number for your provider type

Visit the Office of Medical Assistance Programs Web site at  
<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/healthcaremedicalassistance/index.htm>

changes to the medical necessity guidelines.

The revisions to the guidelines to determine medical necessity of H2 Receptor Blockers were subject to public review and comment and subsequently approved for implementation by the Department.

**PROCEDURE:**

The procedures for prescribers to request prior authorization of H2 Receptor Blockers 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 chapter related to H2 Receptor Blockers) 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

**RESOURCES:**

Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook – SECTION I  
Pharmacy Prior Authorization General Requirements

<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/pharmacyservices/pharmacypriorauthorizationgeneralrequirements/index.htm>

Prior Authorization of Pharmaceutical Services Handbook – SECTION II  
Pharmacy Prior Authorization Guidelines

<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/pharmacyservices/drugsrequiringclinicalpriorauthorization/index.htm>

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE HANDBOOK  
PRIOR AUTHORIZATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

**I. Requirements for Prior Authorization of Histamine 2 (H2) Receptor Blockers**

**A. Prescriptions That Require Prior Authorization**

Prescriptions for H2 Receptor Blockers that meet any of the following conditions must be prior authorized:

1. A non-preferred H2 Receptor Blocker. See the Preferred Drug List (PDL) for the list of preferred H2 Receptor Blockers at: <https://papdl.com/preferred-drug-list>.
2. An H2 Receptor Blocker with a prescribed quantity that exceeds the quantity limit. The list of drugs that are subject to quantity limits, with accompanying quantity limits, is available at: <http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/pharmacyservices/quantitylimitslist/index.htm>.

**B. Review of Documentation for Medical Necessity**

In evaluating a request for prior authorization of a prescription for an H2 Receptor Blocker, the determination of whether the requested prescription is medically necessary will take into account the whether the beneficiary:

1. For a non-preferred H2 Receptor Blocker, has a history of therapeutic failure, contraindication, or intolerance to the preferred H2 Receptor Blockers; **AND**
2. If a prescription for an H2 Receptor Blocker is for a quantity that exceeds the quantity limit, the determination of whether the prescription is medically necessary will also take into account the guidelines set forth in the Quantity Limits Chapter.

NOTE: If the beneficiary does not meet the clinical review guidelines listed above but, in the professional judgment of the physician reviewer, the services are medically necessary to meet the medical needs of the beneficiary, the request for prior authorization will be approved.

**C. Clinical Review Process**

Prior authorization personnel will review the request for prior authorization and apply the clinical guidelines in Section B. above to assess the medical necessity of a prescription for an H2 Receptor Blocker. If the guidelines in Section B. are met, the reviewer will prior authorize the prescription. If the guidelines are not met, the prior authorization request will be referred to a physician reviewer for a medical necessity determination. Such a request for prior authorization will be approved when, in the professional judgment of the physician reviewer, the services are medically necessary to meet the medical needs of the beneficiary.