


<b>ISSUE DATE</b>  October 30, 2019	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>  January 1, 2020	<b>NUMBER</b>  *See below
<b>SUBJECT</b>  Prior Authorization of Steroids, Topical (Formerly Steroids, Topical Low; Steroids, Topical Medium; Steroids, Topical High; and Steroids, Topical Very High) – 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 Steroids, Topical 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 Steroids, Topical to the appropriate managed care organization.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

The Department of Human Services (Department) is combining the following medical necessity guidelines into one guideline titled Steroids, Topical: Steroids, Topical Low; Steroids, Topical Medium; Steroids, Topical High; and Steroids, Topical Very High. The Department is

*01-19-90	09-19-86	27-19-84	33-19-86
02-19-84	11-19-83	30-19-82	
03-19-83	14-19-82	31-19-89	
08-19-92	24-19-84	32-19-82	

**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>

also updating the medical necessity guidelines to clarify that a review for medical necessity of a non-preferred Steroid, Topical will take into account the potency of the requested Steroid, Topical and the beneficiary's diagnosis. There are no other changes to the medical necessity guidelines.

**PROCEDURE:**

The procedures for prescribers to request prior authorization of Steroids, Topical 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 Steroids, Topical) 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 Steroids, Topical (formerly Steroids, Topical Low; Steroids, Topical Medium; Steroids, Topical High; and Steroids, Topical Very High)**

A. Prescriptions That Require Prior Authorization

Prescriptions for a non-preferred Steroid, Topical must be prior authorized.

See the Preferred Drug List (PDL) for the list of preferred Steroids, Topical at:  
<https://papdl.com/preferred-drug-list>.

B. Review of Documentation for Medical Necessity

In evaluating a request for prior authorization of a prescription for a non-preferred Steroid, Topical, the determination of whether the requested prescription is medically necessary will take into account the whether the beneficiary:

1. Has a history of therapeutic failure, contraindication, or intolerance to the preferred Steroids, Topical of the same relative potency (i.e., low, medium, high, very high) and approved or medically accepted for the beneficiary's diagnosis.

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 a Steroid, Topical. 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.