

IHCP pharmacy benefit changes in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency

To assure member access to medications and limit the number of necessary trips to the pharmacy, the Indiana Health Coverage Programs has implemented the following changes to its pharmacy benefits under both the fee-for-service and managed care entity programs:

- Copays for all pharmacy claims are waived
- Preference status of asthma and COPD related metered dose inhalers has been suspended
 - This change allows a member to receive a non-preferred MDI without the need for an initial trial of a preferred MDI
 - Preferred Status for controller inhalers (glucocorticoid and combination long-acting beta agonist/glucocorticoid MDIs) will resume. Members will need to have had an initial trial of a preferred MDI before they may receive a non-preferred MDI
 - Effective August 1, 2020 for members initiating therapy on Non-Preferred controller inhalers
 - Effective November 1, 2020 for members currently on Non-Preferred controller inhalers
 - Note: The temporary suspension of preference status for rescue inhalers (short-acting beta agonist MDIs) remains in effect
- Patient signature requirement for proof of delivery has been suspended
 - Pharmacy staff are requested to complete the patient signature line with “COVID” in lieu of obtaining the patient’s signature
- Three-month extensions have been added to prior authorizations with expiration dates in April and May 2020 (excluding opioids and hepatitis C drugs)
 - This change requires no additional action by the member or pharmacy
- 90-day supplies of maintenance drugs are permitted for all IHCP pharmacy benefit plans (upon member request)
- Early refills for noncontrolled substances are permitted (members should work with their pharmacies to request an early refill)
 - Most plans allow the pharmacist to enter NCPDP submission clarification code: 13
 - Members are limited to two early refills per 60 days
 - **Allowance of early refills, without approved prior authorization, expires June 1, 2020**

In addition, the IHCP reminds pharmacy providers of the option to utilize the NCPDP dispense as written (DAW) code: 8, allowing substitution with a brand name drug if a multisource generic drug were to become unavailable in the marketplace. For additional information, refer to Section 2: Pharmacy Coverage and Reimbursement, page 7 of the [IHCP Pharmacy Services Module](#).