



June 21, 2010

Dear IEHP Provider,

Inland Empire Health Plan is committed to assist clinicians to provide high quality of care to our Members. The use of high-risk medications in the elderly is the focus of this communication. High Risk medications are drugs that bear a heightened risk of causing significant patient harm when they are used in error. IEHP recommends clinicians to review the CMS and NCQA's HEDIS measure on the use of high-risk medications in the elderly:

“The Use of High-Risk Medications in the Elderly measure assesses the percentage of Medicare members who received at least one drug to be avoided in the elderly and the percentage of Medicare members who received at least two different drugs to be avoided in the elderly. A lower rate represents better performance.” (NCQA)

Please review the list of drugs below and apply special reconsideration to reduce the risk of errors. Clinicians are recommended to implement strategies like improving access to information about these drugs (i.e. use of eprescribing system); and limiting access to high-risk medications.

Therapeutic Class/Application	Drugs
Antianxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meprobamate (Equagesic, Equanil, Miltown)
Antiemetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trimethobenzamide (Tigan)
Analgesic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ketorolac (Tordal)
Antihistamine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyproheptadine (Periactin) • Dexchlorpheniramine • Cyproheptadine (Periactin) • Dexchlorpheniramine (Polaramine) • Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) • Ephedrine • Hydroxyzine (Vistaril, Atarax) • Promethazine (Phenergan) • Theophylline • Tripeleminast
Antipsychotics, typical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thioridazine (Mellaril)

Amphetamine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphetamine Mixtures (Adderall) • Benzphetamine (Didrex) • Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine) • Dexmethylphenidate • Diethylpropion (Tenuate) • Methamphetamine (Desoxyn) • Methylphenidate (e.g., Ritalin, Methylin) • Phendimetrazine (Prelu-2) • Phenteramine (Ionamin, Adipex)
Barbiturate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amobarbital-Secobarbital (Tuinal) • Amytal • Aprobarbital (Alurate) • Butabarbital (Butisol) • Butalbital, Butalbital combinations • Mephobarbital (Mebaral) • Pentobarbital (Nembutal) • Phenobarbital • Secobarbital (Seconal)
Long-acting Benzodiazepine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chlordiazepoxide (Librium) • Chlordiazepoxide-Amitriptyline (Limbitrol) • Diazepam (Valium) • Flurazepam (Dalmane)
Other long-acting benzodiazepine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clidinium-Chlordiazepoxide (Librax) • Chlordiazepoxide-Methscopolamine
Calcium Channel blocker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nifedipine (Procardia, Adalat)—short acting only
Gastrointestinal antispasmodic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dicyclomine (Bentyl) • Propantheline (Pro-Banthine)
Belladonna alkaloids (includes combination drugs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atropine sulfate • Belladonna • Hyoscyamine (Anaspaz, Cystospaz, Levsin, Levsinex) In combination (Barbidonna, Bellergal-S, Butibel, Donnatal) • Scopolamine (Scopace, Transderm-Scope)
Skeletal Muscle relaxant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carisoprodol (Soma) • Chlorzoxazone (Paraflex) • Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) • Metaxalone (Skelaxin) • Methocarbamol (Robaxin) • Orphenadrine (Norflex)

Oral estrogen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estinyl • Estratab • Estrace • Estroplate • Estradiol • Ethinyl estradiol • Gynodiol • Menest • Premarin • Ogen
Oral hypoglycemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chlorpropamide (Diabinese)
Narcotic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meperidine • Pentazocine (Talacen, Talwin, • Talwin Cpd, Talwin NX) • Propoxyphene combinations (Darvon CPD, Darvon N, Darvocet-N) • Propoxyphene (Darvon)
Vasodilator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dipyridamole (Persantine) short acting only • Ergot mesyloids (Hydergine) • Isoxsuprine (Vasodilan)

Primary Care Physicians have a critical and essential role in reviewing/advising their elderly patients about the drugs that may impact their health status. We hope this information is valuable to you and please feel free to contact me at 909-890-2943 should you have any questions regarding this communication.

Sincerely,



Chris Chan, Pharm.D.
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 Inland Empire Health Plan