



INLAND EMPIRE HEALTH PLAN

# PHARMACY TIMES

BY IEHP PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

April 23, 2010

## FAQ Regarding the PER Process

Dear IEHP Providers,

This letter has been sent as a reminder to our providers on the Pharmacy Exception Request (PER) process. In response to questions about our PER process, we have gathered information about the different types of common questions our pharmacy providers may have:

**Q: When should a Pharmacy Exception Request (PER) be submitted?**

**A:** A PER should be submitted anytime the pharmacy provider feels that a prescription is Medically Necessary AND rejects for one of these criteria: Non-formulary, Refill too soon, or Quantity limit.

**Q: You receive a prescription for a non-maintenance medication asking for a day supply of 90 days. The medication is on the IEHP formulary but is rejecting for day supply. Should a PER be submitted to IEHP?** (Please see IEHP Formulary Booklet for a list of maintenance medications, i.e. furosemide, simvastatin, metformin, etc.)

**A:** No. If the medication is formulary, it will process for a 30 day supply. Only maintenance medications listed in the formulary booklet are allowed for a 90 day supply.

**Q: A PER was submitted for a non-formulary item more than 2 days ago. Should a new PER be submitted for the same request?**

**A:** No. IEHP makes every attempt to process PERs within 1 business day; however, there are times when PER volume may become high which makes this impossible. IEHP will give priority to requests that are time sensitive based on our clinical judgment, but all requests will be reviewed within a maximum of 5 business days. Submitting duplicate requests only slows down the process.

**Q: If a PER was previously submitted for a prescription and approved, but is not processing for a paid claim. Should a new PER be submitted?**

**A:** No. If the previous PER is still valid based on the expiration date, then please do not submit another PER, call IEHP for assistance with processing.



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**Q: Is it mandatory now to submit all PERs via the internet?**

**A:** Yes. IEHP now requires all of our pharmacy providers to submit PERs via the internet. If you have not received your login information please contact us. Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis for those pharmacy providers unable to get on the web, please contact us.

**Q: You receive a prescription for Pro Air HFA and it rejects as non-formulary. Should a PER be submitted?**

**A:** No. According to California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 1700 et seq. Article 4, Section 4073. Substitution of Generic Drug – Requirements and Exceptions (a):

*A pharmacist filling a prescription order for a drug product prescribed by its trade or brand name may select another drug product with the same active chemical ingredients of the same strength, quantity, and dosage form, and of the same generic drug name as determined by the United States Adopted Names (USAN) and accepted by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA), of those drug products having the same active chemical ingredients.*

Since all Albuterol HFA products have a similar active ingredient (albuterol) and administration, pharmacists should not submit Pharmacy Exception Requests (PERs) for Pro Air HFA or Proventil HFA. They will be returned as submission error. Please dispense approved Ventolin HFA.

**Q: You receive a prescription for a nutritional supplement (i.e. PediaSure, Boost, Ensure, etc.) and it rejects as non-formulary. Should a PER be submitted?**

**A:** No. All requests for nutritional supplements are required to be submitted by the Prescribing Physician along with a Nutritional Evaluation Form (NEF). All requests submitted by a pharmacy will be returned as a submission error.

**Q: You receive a prescription after hours for a medication the member has been receiving regularly in the past and are unable to contact IEHP. The medication is now rejecting. Should you withhold medication until a PER can be submitted?**

**A:** No. IEHP allows our pharmacy providers to use their clinical judgment in providing up to a 3 day supply of medication when medically necessary or until IEHP can be contacted. IEHP will always reimburse the cost of medication up to 3 day supply for all appropriate clinical determinations.

If you have any questions regarding the change, please feel free to contact me at 909-890-2067.

**Inland Empire Health Plan  
Pharmaceutical Services**