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Inland Empire Health Plan

PHARMACY TIMES

BY IEHP PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

April 12, 2019

Important Notice:

Opioid and Benzodiazepine Restrictions for Medi-Cal Members

Dear IEHP Provider,

Effective May 1st, 2019, IEHP will extend opioid and benzodiazepine restrictions to our Medicaid patients. This is in accordance with the Center of Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requirements. The Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS) is also suggesting that these same restrictions should be applied to all other populations.

At IEHP, we look forward to working with our providers to ensure the safety and well-being of our members throughout this time. As provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), clinical evidence supports limiting the day supply of opioids as they significantly increase hazards and physical dependence without any additional pain control. ⁽¹⁾ Often, if the quantity of opioids prescribed for an acute event is not limited, the remaining supply can be a source of misuse.

IEHP will be implementing dispensing restrictions when a prescription is filled at a retail pharmacy. A pharmacist may contact you for clinical justification regarding the Opioid Medication dispensing limitations that may occur at the pharmacy.

Medication Dispensing Restrictions	Description
Prescriptions written for more than 7 days for the treatment of acute pain in opioid naïve patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opioid prescriptions for an <u>acute</u> event will be limited to a maximum of 7-days supply and will reject at the point of sale.• Patient will be considered opioid-naïve if there have been no opioid prescriptions filled in the last 60 days ⁽²⁾.• A Pharmacist will have the ability to override the claim after clinical justification is provided by the Prescriber.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not applicable for chronic pain (i.e. palliative care, cancer, residents of long-term care facilities).
Prescriptions written for greater than or equal to 90 Morphine Milligram Equivalent (MME) per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A rejection will occur when the MME is greater than or equal to 90 per day. MME 90 is equivalent to “9” tablets of hydrocodone/APAP 10/325.• A Pharmacist will have the ability to override the claim after clinical justification is provided by the Prescriber.
Duplicate long-acting opioid agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A rejection will occur at the point of sale when two or more long-acting opioid agents filled concurrently will reject at the point of sale.• A Pharmacist will have the ability to override the claim after clinical justification is provided by the Prescriber.
Concurrent use of an Opioid and Benzodiazepine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An opioid and a benzodiazepine filled concurrently will reject and require review by a Pharmacist.

IEHP aims to support our pharmacy affiliates by establishing escalation protocols regarding these mandates through our Member/Provider Services department. Together, we can be advocates for our patients and combat the opioid crisis one prescription at a time.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us at (909) 890-2049, between 8:00 AM -5:00 PM Monday through Friday. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Karen Hansberger
Deputy Chief Medical Officer

Dr. Edward Jai, PharmD.
Senior Director of Pharmaceutical Services