

# North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program Quarterly News

Published Quarterly by Kepro

Quarter 3

SUMMER 2023

## *Hepatitis C Criteria Update: Harm Reduction Medication Therapy Management*

Harm Reduction Medication Therapy Management (MTM) programs have been shown to reduce the spread of bloodborne diseases in people who inject drugs, including hepatitis B, hepatitis C, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and other sexually transmitted diseases.<sup>1</sup> These programs provide clean syringes for injections through a Syringe Service Program (SSP), education on overdose prevention and treatment with naloxone, and information on substance use disorder therapy.<sup>1</sup> Access to naloxone and proper patient education has been proven to decrease death rates.<sup>2</sup> SSP participants are five times more likely to initiate substance use disorder therapy and three times more likely to stop drug use.<sup>2</sup> SSPs also provide prevention, testing, and treatment referrals for bloodborne diseases by providing immunizations, condoms, and linkage to care for HIV pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis.<sup>1</sup>

**Syringe Service Program participants are five times more likely to initiate substance use disorder therapy and three times more likely to stop drug use.<sup>2</sup>**

Harm Reduction MTM programs also provide support for patients with alcohol use disorder. Patients are educated on the risks of developing cirrhosis and hepatitis C and referred to alcohol treatment programs. Patients are provided with safer use strategies, which include behaviors to drink healthier and safer, methods to limit alcohol consumption, and ways to avoid withdrawal.<sup>3</sup>

### *Hepatitis C Criteria Update*

#### **Effective July 1, 2023:**

- Members currently using injectable drugs of abuse or alcohol who participate in a **Syringe Service Program (SSP)** or **Harm Reduction MTM appointments** may meet criteria for hepatitis C treatment.
- Criteria regarding use of “**Holy Trinity**” drug regimen have been removed.
- **Prescriber requirements** for initial hepatitis C treatment have been removed.

#### **Reminders:**

- A fibrosis score is not required for prior authorization requests for treatment. Some criteria are not applicable for members known to have a fibrosis score of F2 or above.
- Hepatitis B labs are not required with prior authorization requests for treatment.
- Positive marijuana screens are not considered on drug screens. Only positive results for drugs able to be used illicitly by injection are considered on the drug screens.
- Chart notes are only required if the member does not have drug or alcohol screens but has maintained sobriety for the past year or since their last substance use treatment program completion.

#### **References:**

1. North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services. North Dakota Department of Health Syringe Service Program Requirements & Guidance.; 2019. Accessed July 10, 2023. <https://www.ndhealth.gov/hiv/Docs/SEP/ND.SSP.FINAL.072019.pdf>
2. Javed Z, Burk K, Facente S, Pegram L, Ali A, Asher A. Syringe Services Programs a Technical Package of Effective Strategies and Approaches for Planning, Design, and Implementation DEVELOPED BY.; 2020. Accessed July 10, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/ssp/docs/SSP-Technical-Package.pdf>
3. Safer-Use Strategies: Alcohol. Accessed July 10, 2023. <https://depts.washington.edu/harrtlab/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Safer-Use-Alcohol.pdf>

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The “North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program Quarterly News” is a pharmacy newsletter presented by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services and published by Kepro. This newsletter is published as part of a continuing effort to keep the Medicaid provider community informed of important changes in the North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program.

The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services has contracted with Kepro to review and process prior authorizations (PAs) for medications. For a current list of medications requiring a PA, as well as the necessary forms and criteria, visit [www.hidesigns.com/ndmedicaid](http://www.hidesigns.com/ndmedicaid), or call Kepro at (866) 773-0695 to have this information faxed. An important feature on this website is the NDC Drug Lookup, which allows you to determine if a specific NDC is covered (effective date), reimbursement amount, MAC pricing, copay information, and any limitations (prior authorization or quantity limits).

The North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program team appreciates your comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter. To suggest topics for inclusion, please contact Kepro at 1-800-225-6998, or e-mail us at [ND\\_Info@kepro.com](mailto:ND_Info@kepro.com).



## Helpful Numbers:

PA Help Desk	866-773-0695
To fax Pas	855-207-0250
To report adverse reactions	800-FDA-1088

## Stay Informed:

**Quarter 4 Newsletter:**  
Benzodiazepine Deprescribing

**Upcoming DUR Board Meetings:**  
Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 1:00 PM  
Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 1:00 PM