
North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program Quarterly News

Published Quarterly by Health Information Designs, LLC

Welcome to the “North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program Quarterly News,” a pharmacy newsletter presented by the North Dakota Department of Human Services and published by Health Information Designs, LLC. 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 Human Services has contracted with Health Information Designs, LLC (HID) 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.hidndmedicaid.com, or call HID at (866) 773-0695 to have this information faxed. An important feature on this website is the NDC Drug Lookup. This 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).

This newsletter provides information regarding medication safety. Also included is pediatric oral suspension storage recommendations.

The North Dakota Medicaid Pharmacy Program team appreciates your comments and suggestions regarding this newsletter. To suggest topics for inclusion, or to make comments, please contact Health Information Designs, LLC at (334) 502-3262, call toll free at 1-800-225-6998, or e-mail us at info@hidinc.com.



Helpful Numbers

PA Help Desk	866-773-0695
To fax PAs	866-254-0761
To report adverse reactions	800-FDA-1088

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Visit HID's North Dakota Department of Human Services Prior Authorization Webpage, www.hidndmedicaid.com.

Medication Safety

- In 2006, 27,531 people in the United States died from unintentional medication poisoning
- 96% of unintentional poisoning deaths are a result of drug poisoning – with more than half due to prescription drugs
- An estimated 71,000 children (18 and younger) are seen in emergency departments each year because of medication poisonings (excluding recreational drug use). Over 80% were because an unsupervised child found and consumed medication
- Most at risk are young children (under the age of 5) and older adults (65 years of age and older).

It is important to make sure that parents keep ALL medications out of the reach of children; however, certain medications are especially dangerous.

- Benzonatate – indicated for patients aged 10 and older, these cough suppressants look a lot like candy, however, just one or two benzonatate capsules can be toxic to children under the age of 2. Symptoms (seen 15 to 20 minutes after ingestion) of benzonatate poisoning include seizures, cardiac arrest, and coma.
- Drugs that lower blood pressure, such as calcium channel blockers and clonidine are very dangerous for young children – just one or two adult doses can be fatal.
- Opioids can cause sedation and slow breathing in toddlers, which can be fatal. Oral doses of methadone 20mg, morphine 200mg, and codeine 100mg can be enough to cause death in a small child.
- OTC medications can be dangerous for children as well. Iron supplements (even those in multivitamin products), acetaminophen, diphenhydramine, and even topical medications such as methyl salicylate (oil of wintergreen), which is found in topical muscle rubs, and camphor (found in Vicks VapoRub and Campho-Phenique) can be dangerous to children if accidentally ingested.

What can be done to reduce the risk of medication poisonings in children?

- Encourage parents to take all medications seriously and never refer to it as candy.
- Make sure prescriptions are dispensed with child safety caps.
- Provide an accurate measuring device to parents when appropriate – household spoons should not be used for measuring doses of liquid medications.
- Remind parents to store ALL medications securely, including OTC medications and vitamins.
- Encourage parents to get rid of medications that are no longer needed or being used, and remind them about proper disposal of medications.
- Remind patients of the poison center phone number. It is **800-222-1222** in the United States.

Older patients are twice as likely as others to come to emergency departments for adverse drug events and nearly seven times more likely to be hospitalized after that visit.

- Older patients are generally taking more medications, and seeing more providers, than younger patients.
- Older patients are more commonly on drugs that require careful monitoring (e.g. warfarin, digoxin, insulin, etc.)

Encourage elderly patients to use a medication planning device, if taking multiple prescriptions. Also, encourage patients to talk with their providers before taking additional medications, including OTC/naturopathic medications and vitamins.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Medicine safety: who's at risk and what you can do. Accessed February 2011 at www.cdc.gov/Features/MedicineSafety.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Poison prevention. Accessed February 2011 at www.cdc.gov/Features/PoisonPrevention.

Keeping kids safe from medications. Pharmacist's Letter/Pharmacy Technician's Letter 2011;27(2):270210.

Pediatric Antibiotic Oral Suspensions: Storage Recommendations

It is important to be aware of the storage recommendations for the popular pediatric antibiotic oral suspensions. The chart below is intended to be a quick reference for the pharmacy regarding these medications.

Generic Name	Trade Name	Can Be Left at Room Temperature up to.....	If refrigerated, can be kept up to.....
Amoxicillin	Amoxil Trimox	14 days	14 days (refrigeration preferred but not required; improves taste)
Amoxicillin/Clavulanate	Augmentin Clavulin	Do NOT leave at room temperature (only out when giving the dose)	10 days
Azithromycin	Zithromax	10 days	10 days
Cefdinir	Omnicef	10 days	10 days (may be hard to pour accurate dose)
Cephalexin	Keflex	1 day	14 days
Cefprozil	Cefzil	1 day	14 days
Clarithromycin	Biaxin	14 days	Do NOT refrigerate
Contrimoxazole TMP-SMZ	Cotrim Septra	No Stability Concerns	Does not need refrigeration
Penicillin VK	Veetids	1 day	14 days

Allen, JA. Pediatric oral suspensions. Pharmacist's Letter [Internet]. 2003 Nov [cited 2012 May 23];19(11):191109. Available from: <http://pharmacistsletter.therapeuticresearch.com/>



Health Information Designs, LLC is the most experienced and qualified provider of drug utilization review and pharmacy support services in the country. We specialize in helping our clients promote clinically appropriate and cost-effective prescribing, dispensing, and utilization of prescription drugs.

Health Information Designs, LLC was founded in 1976 with a mission to improve patient care and contain costs for state Medicaid agencies by providing drug utilization review (DUR) services. In 1997, HID was acquired by HDI Solutions and subsequently has experienced strong and steady growth as a premium healthcare analytics and pharmacy support services provider. HID is the industry leader in providing comprehensive prescription drug monitoring programs. Currently, HID works with clients in 30 states, including 16 Medicaid agencies, 22 Boards of Pharmacy and state health agencies, and several private healthcare benefit management organizations. The work performed by HID has a daily impact on the healthcare of more than 115 million Americans.

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