

Dear Provider,

Health New England is a Managed Care Organization (MCO) that works in conjunction with MassHealth. The MassHealth Pharmacy Program, in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Mental Health (DMH), has developed a **Pediatric Behavioral Health Medication Initiative** that will require prior authorization to ensure the highest quality and safest care to pediatric members less than 18 years of age in the Primary Care Clinician (PCC) Plan who are prescribed behavioral health medications. The Pediatric Behavioral Health Medication Initiative will require prior authorization for specific behavioral health medication combinations that may be unnecessary, redundant or cause additional adverse reactions, i.e., polypharmacy.

At this time, Health New England will implement the age-edit requirements of the Pediatric Behavioral Health Medication Initiative (listed below). All prescriptions being filled on or after April 1, 2016, will deny and require prior authorization.

This initiative is effective April 1, 2016, and the following situations will require a prior authorization:

1. Any pharmacy claim for an **antipsychotic medication** for members **less than 6 years of age**.
2. Any pharmacy claim for an **antidepressant medication** for members **less than 6 years of age**.
3. Any pharmacy claim for an **alpha₂ agonist or cerebral stimulant** for members **less than 3 years of age**.
4. Any pharmacy claim for **atomoxetine** for members **less than 6 years of age**.
5. Any pharmacy claim for **buspirone 30mg** for members **less than 6 years of age**.
6. Any pharmacy claim for **benzodiazepine** for members **less than 6 years of age**.
7. Any pharmacy claim for **hypnotics/hypnotic benzodiazepines (excluding ramelteon)** for members **less than 6 years of age**.

The details of this initiative, and the specific medications and medication classes that will be affected by this initiative will be reflected in an upcoming update to the MassHealth Drug List.

As a method for continuous quality assurance, improvement and transparency, a multidisciplinary Therapeutic Class Management (TCM) workgroup has been created to retrospectively review prior authorization requests that do not meet the required criteria and to provide an increased level of clinical expertise to evaluate outlier cases. The workgroup may also conduct outreach to individual prescribers to discuss clinically appropriate treatment options in certain cases.

Further information on the Pediatric Behavioral Health Medication Initiative and the MassHealth Drug List can be found at mass.gov/masshealth/pharmacy. The MassHealth Pharmacy Program will continually evaluate this initiative through the quality assurance program, and make adjustments to the criteria as needed based on current evidence-based medicine.



Thank you for joining us in this important and focused effort to help ensure that MassHealth pediatric members receive medically necessary behavioral health medications that are safe and effective, and optimize patient care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "AC", written over a light gray background.

Andrew Colby, RPh, MBA
Director of Pharmacy Services
Health New England

Enclosure: Medications listing

Medications that follow the Pediatric Behavioral Health Medication Initiative (subject to change):**Alpha Agonists**

clonidine ER
clonidine patch
clonidine tablets
guanfacine ER
guanfacine tablets

Antianxiety Agents and Benzodiazepines

alprazolam tablets
alprazolam XR, ODT
alprazolam powder
buspirone
chlordiazepoxide
chlordiazepoxide/amitriptyline
clonazepam tablets
clonazepam ODT
clorazepate
diazepam tablets
diazepam powder
lorazepam tablets
lorazepam powder
midazolam
midazolam powder
meprobamate
oxazepam

Antidepressants

amitriptyline
amoxapine
bupropion XL
bupropion HBr, HCl, SR
bupropion (Zyban)
citalopram
clomipramine
desipramine
desvenlafaxine
doxepin
duloxetine
escitalopram
fluoxetine 10 mg tab/cap, 20mg cap, soln
fluoxetine 20 and 60mg tab, 40 and 90mg cap
fluvoxamine
fluvoxamine ER

imipramine HCl
imipramine pamoate
isocarboxazid
levomilnacipran
maprotiline
mirtazapine
mirtazapine ODT
nefazodone
nortriptyline
paroxetine
paroxetine ER and mesylate
phenelzine
protriptyline
selegiline
sertraline
tranylcypromine
trazodone
trazodone 300mg and ER
trimipramine
venlafaxine
venlafaxine ER tab
vilazodone
vortioxetine

Antipsychotics

aripiprazole
asenapine
chlorpromazine
clozapine
fluphenazine
haloperidol
iloperidone
loxapine
lurasidone
olanzapine
olanzapine/fluoxetine
paliperidone
perphenazine
perphenazine/ amitriptyline
pimozide
quetiapine IR
quetiapine XR
risperidone

risperidone inj
thioridazine
thiothixene
trifluoperazine
ziprasidone

Hypnotics

doxepin (Silenor)
estazolam
eszopiclone
flurazepam
quazepam
temazepam 15, 30mg
triazolam
zaleplon
zolpidem tartrate
zolpidem tartrate ER, SL, spray

Stimulants and Atomoxetine

atomoxetine
D-amphetamine sulfate, dextroamphetamine sulfate
dextroamphetamine solution
dexmethylphenidate
dextroamphetamine/amphetamine
lisdexamfetamine
methamphetamine
methylphenidate
methylphenidate (Daytrana, LA patch)
methylphenidate (Quillivant XR)