

## FAQs: Medication Management Programs

Walgreens Health Initiatives, your pharmacy benefit manager, works with your company or employer to help you get the right kind of prescription medicine for your health, and to help you save money on your medicine. Read on to learn how our step care therapy and prior authorization programs can help.

### Q. What are medication management programs?

- A.** These programs are action plans that:
- Help you get the best results from your medicine
  - May help you save money on the prescription medicines you and your doctor choose

We have two kinds of medication management programs: step care therapy and prior authorization.

Our pharmacists monitor certain medicines to make sure that they are used the right way, for the right reasons, and are right for the patient. Sometimes we talk to or fax your doctor if we have concerns about the medication that was prescribed—whether it is the best choice for treating the problem or the best choice for you. We may recommend another medication that can do just as good a job—but may save money for your health plan, and for you, by keeping copays down.

### Q. What is a step care therapy program?

- A.** This program makes sure you get the right kind of medicine you need for your medical condition—and it also may help you and your plan save money. Here's how it works: If your doctor prescribes a certain medicine that is expensive, but there's another medicine that can do the same job *and* costs less, you must try using the less expensive medicine *first*—unless your doctor informs us otherwise.

### Q. What is a prior authorization (PA) program?

- A.** PA simply means that you have to get approval from Walgreens Health Initiatives before certain prescription medicines will be covered (paid for or partly paid for by your plan).

PA programs review the use of:

- Certain very costly medicines
- Certain medicines that could be misused (used the wrong way by the patient)
- Medicines that might not be the best choice for the patient's health condition

When you fill a prescription, our pharmacists use special guidelines that help them decide if the medicine is the right choice to help you feel better or stay healthy. In many cases, several different medicines can all do the same job. Our job is to help you get medicines that will help you, but at the lowest cost. A PA program also watches to make sure that a patient is not misusing a medicine—such as taking it more often than it should be taken.

### Q. How do I find out if step care therapy or PA programs apply to me?

- A.** Find out by calling the Walgreens Health Initiatives Clinical Call Center toll free at 877-665-6609. It's open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern time. When you call, have this information with you: your member ID number; the name of your medicine; your doctor's name, phone number, and fax number (if available).

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### **Q. If I need a PA or a step care therapy approval for the medicine my doctor prescribed, how do I get it?**

**A.** You, your doctor, or your pharmacist can ask for a PA. Follow these easy steps:

1. Call 877-665-6609 toll free. We will send a fax form to your doctor to get more information about your health and why the doctor wants you to have the medicine.
2. Our PA pharmacists review the information on the fax we receive from your doctor. If the pharmacist agrees that the medication prescription is the best choice for you, the prescription will be approved and covered.

If your doctor sends back the fax right away, you usually find out about approval in one to three days. If your doctor does not reply after 72 hours, and we have tried to make contact three times, we'll send you a letter to let you know. You may need to call your doctor to request a response.

### **Q. Why don't some medicines get approval?**

**A.** These are some of the reasons:

- There is a medical reason why it is not a good idea for you to take that medicine.
- The medicine should be used for other health problems, but not *your* health problem.
- It is a medicine your plan does not cover, such as a cosmetic medicine.
- You first must try using a different, less expensive medicine that does the same job (if your plan is using a step care program). If that medicine does not work for you, then you can ask for approval again for the more expensive medicine.

- Some medicines are approved only for people of a certain age.
- Some medicines are approved only for a certain quantity, such as a certain number of tablets in a 30-day period.

If you have any questions about why your prescription did not get approved, call us toll free at 877-665-6609.

### **Q. If I do not get approval, can I still get the medicine if I pay for it myself?**

**A.** Yes. You can buy the medicine if you pay for it yourself. But remember: If the reason you did not get approval was because our pharmacists thought it was not a safe medicine choice for you, you should talk to your doctor before buying it.

For more information, call 800-207-2568  
or visit us at [WalgreensHealth.com](http://WalgreensHealth.com)