

*Facts for pharmacies*

## Apple Health (Medicaid) Opioid Policy Changes

Effective November 1, 2019, Apple Health will update the Opioid Policy.

### What has changed?

Effective November 1, 2019, the policy will now include a maximum daily dose limit of 120 morphine milligram equivalents (120 MME). In order to exceed the daily dose of 120 MME, an authorization is required.

**Expedited authorization code 8500000542**, used for when the patient is known to be a chronic opioid user at the currently prescribed dose prior to Apple Health enrollment, **will no longer be active** and an authorization must be requested to override the applicable limits.

### What will remain the same?

The quantity of opioids that can be prescribed to opiate naïve patients for non-cancer pain. The limits for opioid naïve patient's prescriptions are:

- No more than 18 doses (approximately a 3-day supply) for patients age 20 or younger.
- No more than 42 doses (approximately a 7-day supply) for patients age 21 or older.

At the point of transition from acute to chronic opioid treatment, defined as six weeks of therapy, a prior authorization is required.

### Will the Apple Health managed care plans have the same limits?

Yes. The Apple Health opioid policy is used by all the Apple Health managed care plans and the Apple Health fee-for-service program.

### Are there exceptions to the limits?

Yes. Some patients will be given a temporary authorization (1 year) to allow for transition to the new limits. For patients previously established (claims history shows use of opioids for 42 days in the last 90 day period or between August 2019 – October 2019) at daily doses >200 MME, Apple Health will proactively create temporary authorizations (1 year) to override the MME limit. If the patient remains on an opioid dose >120 MME after the one year authorization expires, a new authorization will be required.

In some situations the limits may be overridden by using an expedited authorization code.

- If the prescriber indicates “Exempt” on the prescription, **expedited authorization code 8500000541** may be used to override the opiate naïve dosing limits. This expedited authorization code **will not** override the acute to chronic opioid limit or the maximum daily dose limit of 120 MME.
- If the patient is undergoing active cancer treatment, hospice, palliative care or end-of-life care, **expedited authorization code 8500000540** may be used to override the opiate naïve dosing limits and the acute to chronic opioid limit. The expedited authorization code **will not** override the maximum daily dose limit of 120 MME.

### Has the authorization process changed?

No. The process is the same.

To request prior authorization, contact the patient’s health plan. If you have questions about how to request a prior authorization go to the health plan’s website or contact the plan.

<a href="#">Amerigroup (AMG)</a>	1-800-600-4441
<a href="#">Apple Health (Medicaid) fee-for-service</a>	1-800-562-3022
<a href="#">Community Health Plan of Washington (CHPW)</a>	1-800-440-1561
<a href="#">Coordinated Care of Washington (CCW)</a>	1-877-644-4613
<a href="#">Molina Healthcare of Washington, Inc. (MHW)</a>	1-800-869-7165
<a href="#">United Healthcare Community Plan (UHC)</a>	1-877-305-8952

### Why is the opioid policy changing?

On October 24, 2018, President Trump signed the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (“SUPPORT”) for Patients and Communities Act. The SUPPORT Act includes several provisions directed to the Medicaid program that requires updates to the current opioid policy.