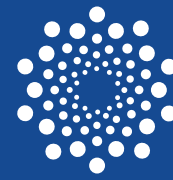


Medical Management Protects Patients and Reduces Costs



California Association of
Health Plans

Medical management practices such as prior authorization and step therapy are important tools used by health plans to ensure patients receive the highest quality medical care. With a comprehensive view of the health care system and each patient's medical claims history, health plans ensure that medications or treatments prescribed are safe, effective, and affordable to meet each patient's health care needs.

Real World Medical Management Stories:

Health Plans Ensuring the Highest Quality Care and Preventing Wasteful Medical Spending

A Patient with Suspected Gallbladder Problem Receives Unnecessary CT Scan

A patient visited her doctor and complained of pain under her ribcage. Her doctor believed it may be a gallbladder issue and ordered a CT scan of the abdomen, even though evidence-based guidelines say that an ultrasound should be the first action taken. When provided with this information, the doctor reversed course and opted for the ultrasound.

The ultrasound allowed the doctor to get a clear look at the gallbladder without exposing the patient to radiation under a CT scan. Ultrasounds also cost far less than CT scans, while still allowing for a diagnosis on the condition.

This example of prior authorization not only saved money, but also protected and enhanced the patient's care by encouraging the use of proper imaging for this situation and providing the doctor with the information needed for a diagnosis.

Prior Authorization Prevents Unnecessary Radiation Exposure in State Medicaid Program

A Medicaid patient received 22 CT scans during her pregnancy at tremendous risk to her unborn child. In another case, a two-year-old child received 19 CT scans in a period of just one month, including five scans in a single visit. These are just a few examples of the poor quality of care that existed in a state fee-for-service Medicaid program prior to a prior authorization program being implemented. But in just the first year of the program being implemented in that state, the prevention of unnecessary radiation exposure led to the potential avoidance of more than 32 additional cancers in those Medicaid patients over their lifetimes.

Evidence-Based Guidelines Protect Patient with Ataxia From Unnecessary Radiation Exposure

A patient was feeling dizzy and went to see his doctor. The doctor believed the issue may have been ataxia, when a person lacks muscle control. Often providers will order a CT scan of the brain even though the evidence-based guidelines suggest that an MRI of the brain is the best option. An MRI provides a more detailed image and doesn't require radiation. Using evidence-based guidelines, the doctor ordered the MRI instead of the CT scan and was able to find the source of the issue faster and avoid unnecessary and potentially harmful radiation.

(Source: Evicore)



Ensuring providers are equipped with the most up-to-date medical guidelines is a crucial part of medical management and can make all the difference in whether a patient receives the quality care they need while avoiding wasteful, unnecessary, and potentially harmful procedures.

Legislative Efforts To Dismantle Medical Management Practices Will Increase Health Care Costs, Lead to Patient Harm, and Benefit the Pharmaceutical Industry.



Step Therapy: An Important Patient Safety Measure

A review of several studies found that step therapy programs for many drugs provide significant cost savings through greater use of lower-cost alternatives. The review also found step therapy programs led to some reduced use of prescription drugs.

A Kaiser Family Foundation analysis also recently noted that there is “much that states can do to address the misuse of opioids,” including requiring step therapy and prior authorization.

Tackling Opioid Addictions and Misuse with Step Therapy



Allows health plans to offer drug alternatives that are medically equivalent, safer, and cost effective.



Starts with low-risk pain medication and progresses to more risky therapies only if necessary. In essence, step therapy has a patient try non-addictive medications before moving to more serious drugs like opioids.



Puts the physician in the driver's seat. While the health plans establish the process and timelines for advancing patients through step therapy, doctors can obtain a faster schedule or skip steps or even use brand-name drugs if the circumstance warrants it.



Effectively minimizes the harmful side effects of highly potent medications, manages health care costs, and prevents over-prescription.

3 Reasons to Vote No

On Bills That Aim To Dismantle Medical Management Practices:

- 1 Will increase health care costs and slow important progress toward reducing drug misuse and overdose.
- 2 Remove essential tools that ensure providers are equipped with the most up to date medical guidelines so patients receive the highest quality care.
- 3 Backed by the pharmaceutical industry which stands to gain from greater use of brand name and specialty drugs since these bills inherently will reduce the use of more affordable generic drug alternatives.