

# Opioid prescriber guide

## UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Pennsylvania Medicaid

The programs described in this guide were created to help UnitedHealthcare Community Plan members receive the opioid care and treatment they need in safe and effective ways. We've based our measures on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) opioid treatment guidelines to help prevent misuse of short-acting and long-acting opioid medications.

### Concurrent Drug Utilization Review program (cDUR)

The cDUR program uses the pharmacy claims processing system to screen all prescriptions at the point-of-service and checks for possible inappropriate drug prescribing and utilization, as well as potentially dangerous medical implications or drug interactions. The program includes communication to the dispensing pharmacy at point-of-service through claims edits and messaging. The pharmacist needs to address the clinical situation at the point of sale before entering appropriate National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) codes to receive an approved claim, unless otherwise stated below.

<b>Drug-drug interaction – Opioids and benzodiazepines</b>	Point-of-sale alert for concurrent use of opioids and benzodiazepines.
<b>Drug-drug interaction – Opioids and sedative hypnotics</b>	Point-of-sale alert for concurrent use of opioids and sedative hypnotics.
<b>Drug-drug interaction – Opioids and skeletal muscle relaxants</b>	Point-of-sale alert for concurrent use of opioids and skeletal muscle relaxants.
<b>Drug-inferred health state – Opioids and prenatal vitamins and medications used in pregnancy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced point-of-sale alert for concurrent use of opioids and prenatal vitamins and for concurrent use of opioids and medications used in pregnancy (e.g., doxylamine/pyridoxine)</li><li>• Doesn't require pharmacist to enter appropriate NCPDP codes to receive approved claim</li></ul>
<b>High dose acetaminophen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limits combination opioids plus acetaminophen (APAP)</li><li>• Prevents doses of APAP greater than 4 g per day</li></ul>
<b>High dose opioids</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced point-of-sale alert for opioid doses more than 50 MME that recommends the pharmacist offer an opioid antagonist</li><li>• Doesn't require pharmacist to enter appropriate NCPDP codes to receive approved claim</li></ul>

## Retrospective Drug Utilization Review (rDUR) programs

These programs analyze claims daily and send communications to prescribers.

<b>Abused medications DUR program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies members daily who are getting multiple opioid prescriptions from multiple prescribers and/or filling at multiple pharmacies</li><li>• Also identifies members with chronic early refill attempts, overlapping LAOs, overlapping SAOs, high daily doses of opioids, a diagnosis of opioid overdose with an opioid fill, overlapping opioid and MAT medications, overlapping opioid, muscle relaxant and benzodiazepine and overlapping opioid and opioid potentiator</li><li>• Sends patient-specific information to all prescribers with medication fill history in last 4 months</li></ul>
<b>Pharmacy lock-in program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pharmacy lock-in programs vary by state; however, all include filling of opioids by multiple prescribers at multiple pharmacies as an inclusion criterion</li><li>• Requires selected members to use a single pharmacy for all medications for 1 year</li></ul>

## Utilization Management (UM) programs

These programs help promote appropriate opioid use, reduce costs and improve member health outcomes.

<b>Cough and cold products containing opioid components</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limits quantities per fill of 120 mL (units) and a 30-day maximum quantity of 360 mL (units)</li><li>• Requires prior authorization for members under 18</li></ul>
<b>Cumulative 50 milligram morphine equivalent (MME) limit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limits dosage at point-of-sale for all opioid products up to 50 MME</li><li>• Prevents the processing of cumulative opioid doses exceeding the limit</li></ul>
<b>Drug-drug interaction – Benzodiazepines and medication assisted treatment (MAT)</b>	Requires prior authorization for benzodiazepines when concurrently used with MAT drugs (MAT doesn't require prior authorization).
<b>Drug-drug interaction – Opioids and MAT</b>	Requires prior authorization for opioids when concurrently used with MAT drugs (MAT doesn't require prior authorization).
<b>Drug-drug interaction – Skeletal muscle relaxants and MAT</b>	Requires prior authorization for skeletal muscle relaxants when concurrently used with MAT drugs (MAT doesn't require prior authorization).

## Utilization Management (UM) programs (cont.)

These programs help promote appropriate opioid use, reduce costs and improve member health outcomes.

<b>Drug-drug interaction - Sleep aids and MAT</b>	Requires prior authorization for sleep aids when concurrently used with MAT drugs (MAT doesn't require prior authorization).
<b>Duplicate therapy - Long-acting opioids (LAOs)</b>	Requires prior authorization for concurrent use of LAOs in the last 7 days.
<b>Duplicate therapy - Short-acting opioids (SAOs)</b>	Requires prior authorization for concurrent use of SAOs in the last 7 days.
<b>LAO prior authorization</b>	Prior authorization requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attestation of appropriate use and monitoring</li><li>• Step through SAO (non-cancer pain) and step through preferred LAOs</li></ul>
<b>Overdose prevention (naloxone)</b>	Prior authorization isn't required for preferred naloxone products (e.g., generic naloxone injection and Narcan® Nasal Spray).
<b>SAO supply limit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For members under 21, SAOs are limited to 3-day supplies per 365 days</li><li>• For members 21 and older, SAOs are limited to 5-day supplies per 180 days</li><li>• Requires prior authorization to exceed these limits</li></ul>
<b>Transmucosal fentanyl product prior authorization</b>	Requires that prior authorization includes documentation of pain due to cancer and patient is already receiving opioids.
<b>Evidence-based prescribing programs</b> These programs focus on outreach to prescribers.	
<b>Fraud/waste/abuse evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retrospective controlled substance claims analysis</li><li>• Identifies outlier opioid prescribers</li></ul>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>Miscellaneous - Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) license edit</b>	Verifies DEA number or license is active and matches scheduled medication in the claim.
<b>Miscellaneous - Refill-too-soon threshold</b>	Increases the refill-too-soon threshold to 90% for opioids and other Schedule CII-V controlled substances.

## Pharmacy prior authorization

Information and forms are available on our [Pennsylvania Community Plan Pharmacy Prior Authorization Forms](#) page.

## We're here to help

If you have questions, call **888-362-3368**.

Support for your patients:

- 24/7 substance use helpline at **855-780-5955**, available to our members who are your patients, and their caregivers; staffed by licensed behavioral health providers
- [liveandworkwell.com](https://www.liveandworkwell.com)