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Subject: Adult Stimulant Restrictions

Key Points:

- New prior authorization (PA) requirements for adults 21 and older for central nervous system (CNS) stimulants
- Applies only to members newly starting treatment with CNS stimulants
- Adult restriction will take effect December 12, 2022

Dear Prescriber:

Prescription CNS stimulants are commonly used for the treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), narcolepsy, and excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) in children and adults. In 2020, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) reported 10.3 million people in the US abusing or misusing CNS stimulants.¹ Drug overdose deaths that involved a psychostimulant with abuse potential, including methamphetamine, rose from 547 in 1999 to 23,837 in 2020.¹ In Massachusetts, an analysis of stimulant prescription rates indicated rapid growth from 2010 to 2019.²

For the treatment of ADHD, the use of CNS stimulant medications in adults is typically appropriate. The diagnosis of ADHD in adults should consider the diagnostic criteria outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition.³ In addition, treatment guidelines generally recommend the use of long-acting (LA) agents, as clinical literature indicates short-acting formulations are more commonly abused than LA formulations, with the highest proportion of misuse among young adults than other age groups.⁴⁻⁶

Given this information, MassHealth will restrict CNS stimulant medications for adults beginning December 12, 2022. Prior authorization (PA) will be required for adult members 21 and older who are newly starting any CNS stimulant medication (defined as those who have not filled a CNS stimulant prescription within the last 90 days). Managed care organizations will implement this policy no later than April 2023.

Please note that for adult members 21 and older, initiating treatment with a CNS stimulant will require an appropriate diagnosis for the use of the CNS stimulant. If applicable, such requests must also meet PA criteria unique to the requested drug, as well as any applicable quantity limits.

The MassHealth Drug List, including **Therapeutic Class Table 31** (outlining the coverage status and PA criteria for CNS stimulants) and the **Cerebral Stimulant and ADHD Drugs PA** form, will be updated to reflect these changes. The MassHealth Drug List is on the MassHealth Pharmacy Program website at www.mass.gov/masshealth/pharmacy.

Safe and appropriate prescribing and use of prescription stimulants is a priority for all of us in healthcare. We appreciate your continued support and dedication to providing high quality care to MassHealth members.



Sincerely,



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References

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3. American Psychiatric Association: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition. Arlington, VA, American Psychiatric Association, 2013.
4. Post RE, Kurlansik SL. Diagnosis and Management of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Adults. Am Fam Physician. 2012 May 1;85(9):890-896.
5. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: Diagnosis and management [guideline on the Internet]. London (UK). September 2019. Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng87/>.
6. Board AR, Guy G, Jones CM, Hoots B. Trends in stimulant dispensing by age, sex, state of residence, and prescriber specialty – United States, 2014-2019. Drug Alcohol Depend. 2020 Dec 1;217:108297. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2020.108297.