



DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111*



JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

TERENCE G. DOUGHERTY
Medicaid Director

March 23, 2010

Dear Prescriber:

Effective April 1, 2010, MassHealth will be launching a new initiative involving test strips used for blood glucose monitoring for diabetes. Beginning on April 1, 2010, the following brands of diabetes blood glucose test strips made by Abbott Diabetes Care will be preferred by the MassHealth Pharmacy Program:

- Freestyle®,
- Freestyle Lite®, and
- Precision Xtra®.

These Abbott Diabetes Care test strip products will not require prior authorization as long as the prescription is below certain quantity limits. For prescriptions filled at a pharmacy, prior authorization will be required for quantities greater than 100 strips per month. Please note that if we see a recent claim in the member's profile for insulin, we will allow a quantity of up to 200 strips per month filled at a pharmacy without requiring a written prior authorization request.

Prior authorization from MassHealth will be required for any other brand of test strip prescribed for MassHealth members being filled at a pharmacy (for all quantities). Prescribers will need to submit a prior authorization request to MassHealth demonstrating that one of the Abbott Diabetes Care preferred test strips do not meet the MassHealth member's medical needs, and why the requested brand of test strip is medically necessary. This change in prior authorization requirements affects new prescriptions written on or after April 1, 2010, that will be filled at a pharmacy. Members may continue to obtain other strips on existing prescriptions without prior authorization until the remaining refills on the existing prescriptions have been filled.

As part of this initiative, Abbott Diabetes Care is required to provide meters for MassHealth members at no cost to MassHealth, MassHealth providers, or MassHealth members. Abbott Diabetes Care will provide meters for members in one of the following ways.

- Abbott will be visiting prescribers and pharmacies around the state to leave meters for MassHealth members to pick up.
- MassHealth members will have the choice of calling Abbott toll-free at 1-866-224-8892 to receive a meter shipped directly to them within two days.

Abbott Diabetes Care also offers training and support to help members get started on their new meters.

MassHealth strives to ensure a smooth implementation of this initiative. Our goal is to provide MassHealth members with easy access to diabetes test strips and the training they need if they are changing to a new meter. We know that daily blood glucose monitoring is essential for proper diabetes management.

Abbott Diabetes Care intends to contact as many prescribers in the state as possible to answer questions about the initiative or training issues prescribers may have. If you would like to contact Abbott with any questions, please call 1-866-216-5747. MassHealth pharmacy providers and members are receiving similar information regarding this change.

We thank you for your past and continued support of MassHealth.

Sincerely,

Terence G. Dougherty
Medicaid Director