



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111

MassHealth
Prescriber Bulletin 5
December 2000

TO: Physicians, Dental Providers, Outpatient Hospitals, Podiatrists, Community Health Centers, Nurse Midwives, and Nurse Practitioners Participating in MassHealth

FROM: Wendy E. Warring, Commissioner

RE: Suspension of Prescriber Bulletin 2—PA for Sedative-Hypnotic Sleep Medications

***Prior Authorization
No Longer Required
for Certain Sleep
Medications***

The Division of Medical Assistance has suspended, until further notice, MassHealth Prescriber Bulletin 2 (dated March 2000), which required prior authorization for all medication that is FDA-approved for treatment of insomnia.

Insomnia is a sleep disorder that affects an estimated 60 million Americans a year, according to the National Sleep Foundation. While many patients with insomnia may be treated effectively without the use of drugs, some patients are more effectively treated with sedative, sleep-hypnotic medication. In those instances where sleep-hypnotic therapy is indicated, research findings show that many medications stop working after several weeks of continued use. Use of the medication, therefore, should be limited to a maximum of two to three weeks.

List of Drugs

The following drugs, which were identified in Prescriber Bulletin 2 as requiring prior authorization, no longer require it.

Amobarbital/Secobarbital (Tuinal)	Quazepam (Doral)
Chloral Hydrate (Noctec)	Secobarbital (Seconal)
Estazolam (ProSom)	Temazepam (Restoril)
Ethchlorvynol (Placidyl)	Triazolam (Halcion)
Flurazepam (Dalmane)	Zaleplon (Sonata)
Pentobarbital (Nembutal)	Zolpidem (Ambien)

Questions

If you have any questions about the information in this bulletin, please call the MassHealth Provider Services Department at (617) 628-4141 or 1-800-325-5231.
