

All MCOs: Pharmacy Benefit Updates Related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak

Background:

This notice provides pharmacy benefit updates related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Key Details:

Early Refills and 90-day Supplies

On March 19 the Texas State Board of Pharmacy authorized pharmacists in Texas to dispense up to a 30-day supply of medication (other than a schedule II-controlled substance) for patients in Texas in response to the state of disaster declaration for COVID-19.

Action:

MCOs must ensure their pharmacy benefit manager's claims processing systems can accommodate early refills. Additionally, the MCO should be prepared to accept 90-day supplies of medication. System changes should be ready or implement a manual process **by Friday, March 20**. MCOs that are unable to complete system changes by this date may implement a manual process in the interim.

In accordance with UMCC 8.1.21.12, MCOs are required to have a process to ensure Medicaid and CHIP members receive free outpatient pharmaceutical deliveries from community retail pharmacies in their service areas. The MCO cannot charge a member any fees for choosing to use a mail-order pharmacy, including postage or handling for standard or expedited deliveries.

Mail-order delivery is not an appropriate substitute for delivery from a qualified community retail pharmacy unless requested by the member. MCOs must not limit 90-day supplies to mail-order pharmacies only. A 90-day supply must be available through all contracted pharmacies.

Additional Information:

Update on Potential Drug Shortage

The outbreak may impact the medical product supply chain in the U.S., including potential drug shortages. The Vendor Drug Program (VDP) is monitoring the U.S. Food & Drug Administration website of new drug shortages related to the outbreak. VDP encourages providers to complete the Drug Shortage Notification ([HHS Form 1315](#)) to inform HHSC of potential shortages impacting prescribing choice or pharmacy claim processing. This process ensures notification of alternatives to the shorted drug, timeline of the shortage, and the drug's availability for use.

On March 12, NPR reported how disruptions in China are affecting some drug makers' ability to make key ingredients: "...the serious supply disruptions many have feared haven't come to pass. Many facilities are back online after production interruptions related to the coronavirus response." Facilities mentioned there are concerns of a second wave of setbacks that could lead to possible drug shortages ("[How Coronavirus Is Affecting The U.S. Pharmaceutical Supply](#)").

Contact:

VDP-operations@hhsc.state.tx.us

All MCOs: Claims for Telephone (Audio-Only) Medical Services

Background:

Providers may bill codes 99201-99205 and 99211-99215 for dates of service of March 20, 2020, through April 30, 2020, to receive Medicaid reimbursement for telephone (audio-only) medical services.

Key Details:

To help ensure continuity of care during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) response, HHSC is authorizing providers to bill codes 99201-99205 and 99211-99215 for telephone (audio-only) medical (physician delivered) evaluation and management services delivered on March 20, 2020, through April 30, 2020. Providers should continue to use the 95 modifier to indicate that remote delivery has occurred.

Telephonic evaluation and management services are not to be billed if clinical decision-making dictates a need to see the patient for an in-person or telemedicine (video) office visit within 24 hours or at the next available appointment. In those circumstances, the telephone service shall be considered a part of the subsequent office visit. If the telephone call follows an office visit performed and reported within the past seven calendar days for the same diagnosis, then the telephone services are considered part of the previous office visit and are not separately billed.

Additional Information:

Providers can refer to the *Texas Medicaid Provider Procedures Manual, Telecommunication Services Handbook* for additional information about the Texas Medicaid telemedicine services benefit.

Resources:

http://www.tmhpc.com/Pages/Medicaid/Medicaid_Publications_ProviderManual_Current.aspx

Contact:

MCO_COVID-19_Inquiries@hhsc.state.tx.us

All MCOs: Claims for Telephone (Audio-Only) Behavioral Health Services

Background:

Providers may bill to receive Medicaid reimbursement for the following behavioral health services delivered by telephone (audio only) from March 20, 2020, through April 30, 2020: Psychiatric Diagnostic Evaluation, Psychotherapy, Peer Specialist Services, Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT), Substance Use Disorder Services, and Mental Health Rehabilitation services.

Key Details:

To help ensure continuity of care during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) response, HHSC is authorizing providers to bill the following codes for telephone (audio-only) delivered behavioral health services from March 20, 2020, through April 30, 2020:

- Psychiatric Diagnostic Evaluation: 90791, 90792
- Psychotherapy: 90832, 90834, 90837, 90846, 90847, 90853
- Peer Specialist Services: H0038
- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT): H0049, G2011, 99408
- Substance Use Disorder Services: H0001, H0004, H0005
- Mental Health Rehabilitation: H0034, H2011, H2012, H2014, H2017

Providers should continue to use the 95 modifier to indicate that remote delivery has occurred.

Additional Information:

Providers can refer to the *Texas Medicaid Provider Procedures Manual, Behavioral Health and Case Management Services Handbook* for additional information about Texas Medicaid behavioral health benefits, as well as the *Telecommunication Services*

Resources:

http://www.tmhp.com/Pages/Medicaid/Medicaid_Publications_ProviderManual_Current.aspx

Contact:

MCO_COVID-19_Inquiries@hhsc.state.tx.us