

Effective 01/01/2014
Xopenex[®]HFA (levalbuterol) moves to PA Required
Proair[®]HFA (albuterol) and Proventil[®]HFA (albuterol) are Preferred
Short-Acting Beta-Agonist Inhalers on PDL

October 23, 2013

Dear Prescriber:

Seven years ago we wrote to you to announce that Xopenex[®]HFA (levalbuterol tartrate) was becoming the sole and exclusive short-acting beta-agonist inhaler on the Preferred Drug List (PDL) for the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA). At that time, there was much uncertainty in the availability and cost of inhalers within the short-acting beta agonist class. To date, this formulary change has resulted in approximately 2.4 million dollars in savings to the State of Vermont on nearly 196,000 claims. Last year, Proair[®]HFA and Proventil[®]HFA were moved to a preferred position in order to provide prescribers more options. Today we are writing to let you know that the financial marketplace has significantly changed and that effective **1/1/2014** Xopenex[®]HFA will be moving to a non-preferred position on the PDL.

As you are aware, clinical evidence supports a level of efficacy and safety that is comparable between albuterol and levalbuterol. Current clinical guidelines do not prefer one SABA over another.^{1,2}

We would ask that in order to limit disruption to your office and patients, you begin switching your patients currently receiving Xopenex[®]HFA inhalers to Proair[®]HFA or Proventil[®]HFA as you see these patients or prescriptions come up for renewal.

There will be no grandfathering, so effective **1/1/2014** all prescriptions for Xopenex[®]HFA will reject for prior authorization if you have not previously requested prior authorization (in the event that this is deemed necessary). We recognize that this change may have significant implications for prescribers; therefore we are providing this notice to allow adequate time to address this change.

All pharmacies are also being alerted to this impending change to ensure that they have adequate inventory on hand.

You are receiving this mailing as per our current pharmacy claims activity you have issued a prescription for Xopenex[®]HFA within the past six months. If you would like to receive a list of all your patients currently filling claims for Xopenex[®]HFA, please contact our on-site Catamaran Account Coordinator, Michelle Sirois at 1-802-879-5940. If you have questions related to this change in benefit coverage, please feel free to contact our on-site Catamaran Clinical Consultant, Diane Neal, R.Ph, at 1-802-879-5605.

Thank you for your continued support of the State of Vermont's clinical pharmacy programs.

Sincerely,



Nancy Hogue, Pharm.D.
Director of Pharmacy Services

1.FitzGerald M, Bateman ED, Boulet LP, Cruz AA, Haahtela T, Levy ML et al. Global Initiative for Asthma. Global Strategy for Asthma Management and Prevention (guideline on the Internet). 2012. Available from: www.ginasthma.org. Accessed October 23, 2013.
2.National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Expert Panel Report 3: Guidelines for the diagnosis and management of asthma (guideline on the Internet). NHLBI 2007. Available from <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/asthma/asthgdln.htm>. Accessed October 23, 2013.