

NOTE: Important Pharmacy Program Change

***Oxycodone and Hydromorphone Immediate Release Products* Daily Quantity Limits and First Fill Days' Supply Limit Effective November 5th, 2014**

October 15th, 2014

Dear Prescriber:

Earlier this year, the Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board examined over 20,000 oxycodone and hydrocodone immediate release prescription claims for beneficiaries of the public programs of the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA). Patterns of utilization including quantity per day and days' supply were evaluated. While the majority of claims were for short days' supply and moderate quantities of tablets per day, the DUR Board determined that there were opportunities to limit the supply of short acting opioid analgesics that would be available for possible abuse and diversion without impacting clinical care. Therefore, after careful deliberation, the Board voted to implement daily quantity limits and a first fill days' supply limit for oxycodone and hydromorphone immediate release (IR).

According to the 2011 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), more than six million Americans abuse prescription drugs. That same study revealed more than 70 percent of people abusing prescription pain relievers got them through friends or relatives, a statistic that includes raiding the family medicine cabinet.

Oxycodone IR and hydromorphone IR are generally prescribed for acute pain, including post-operative use and injuries, such as fractures. The need for an opiate analgesic in these situations is often short lived. The DUR Board would like to encourage prescribers to prescribe the fewest number of dosage units for the shortest period of time as is clinically appropriate. The limits being implemented are generous and considered a first, but important, step in minimizing the potential for abuse and diversion.

Beginning 11/05/2014, Oxycodone IR will be limited to 12 dosage units/day and hydromorphone IR will be limited to 16 dosage units/day. In addition, for patients who have not filled a prescription for the product in the last 45 days, the initial fill will be limited to a 14 day supply. Initial fill limits (but no quantity limits) will also apply to oral liquid solutions of oxycodone and hydromorphone. Both oxycodone IR and hydromorphone IR are available in a variety of dosage strengths (refer to table on back). Patients requiring greater daily quantity limits are candidates to be moved to the next highest dosage strength, if applicable. Consideration should also be given to the use of adjunctive pain medications and therapies, including an evaluation of the need for a long acting opioid analgesic.

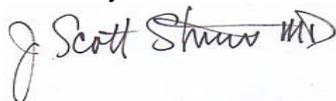
Per our current pharmacy claims activity, you have issued an oxycodone IR and/or hydromorphone IR prescription for at least one DVHA patient in the last 90 days and the DVHA is notifying you of these important program changes. Patients identified as filling prescriptions routinely that exceed the new daily quantity limits were given temporary prior authorizations to override the quantity limit edits, in order to give providers time to evaluate these dosage levels. These PAs will expire on 12/01/2014. An additional sheet is included in this letter if any of your patients were identified as requiring such a PA.

If you believe your patient should be maintained on a daily quantity limit that exceeds the newly established maximum, you will need to request a prior authorization with either a phone call to the Clinical Call Center or a fax using the General PA form. Exceptions will be granted by the Clinical Call Center for patients with pain due to oncology diagnoses and for whom dose consolidation is not possible. Requests for other exceptions will be reviewed by the DVHA Medical Director. Approval for prescriptions exceeding daily quantity limits will be assessed on a patient by patient basis after relevant clinical information supporting the request is provided by the prescriber.

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,



J. Scott Strenio, M.D.
Medical Director

Oxycodone IR/Hydromorphone IR DVHA Preferred Drug Status and Daily Quantity Limits

PREFERRED PRODUCT – NO PA REQUIRED	QUANTITY LIMIT PER DAY	14 DAYS' SUPPLY INITIAL FILL LIMIT	PA REQUIRED
Hydromorphone (generic) 2, 4 & 8 mg tablets	16	√	Dilaudid® 2, 4 & 8 mg tablets
	---	√	Hydromorphone (generic) Oral Liquid 1 mg/ml and Dilaudid® Oral Liquid 1 mg/ml
Oxycodone (generic) 5, 10, 15, 20 & 30 mg tablets	12	√	
Oxycodone (generic) 1 mg/ml Oral Solution	---	√	Oxycodone (brand) 1 mg/ml Oral Solution
Oxycodone (generic) 20 mg/ml Oral Concentrate	---	√	Oxycodone (brand) 20 mg/ml Oral Concentrate
	12	√	Oxycodone (generic) 5 mg caps