

Effective Tuesday December 11th, 2012
Prior Authorization Required for Patients < 18 years old
Starting a new Atypical (Second Generation) Antipsychotic Medication

December 5, 2012

Dear Prescriber:

The Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) would like to thank all of you who have taken the time to complete the pediatric antipsychotic medication surveys that were sent out earlier for your patients who were previously established on these therapies. We will be compiling the survey results to identify areas where more support and educational opportunities are needed in order to assist you improve the quality of care for these children.

While the use of antipsychotic medications has risen in the population overall, the increased use of these drugs among children is of particular concern due to worrisome side effects that may be life-long.¹ Many newer antipsychotics are not approved for use in children and there is often insufficient literature to support their use in this population. At the same time, we recognize that these medications may be of enormous benefit and allow certain children to remain functional in their home and/or school environment.

After careful consideration, the DVHA will be implementing prior authorization (PA) criteria for the use of all atypical antipsychotic medications in children. Prior Authorization (PA) criteria were presented and approved at the October 30th, 2012 Drug Utilization Review Board meeting. A copy of these criteria can be found after 12/10/2012 at <http://dvha.vermont.gov/for-providers/preferred-drug-list-clinical-criteria>. These criteria will apply to both branded and generic products as the criteria are based on safety and evidence-based clinical practice recommendations and not solely on the cost of the medication. You may call or fax (using a general PA request form) to our Clinical Call Center per your usual routine. No further surveys will be sent out for new starts. Subsequently, prior authorization renewal will be required once yearly in order to provide an opportunity for re-evaluation of the need for continued therapy.

If you have any questions related to this change, please 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
Department of Vermont Health Access

¹ Borkowski, L., Fugh-Berman, A., Mullins, P., Wood, S. 2012: "Focus on Use of Antipsychotics in Children." Impacts of Pharmaceutical Marketing on Healthcare Services in the District of Columbia, Government of the District of Columbia Department of Health Regulation and Licensing Administration, page 25