



State of Vermont
Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA)
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****Attention Pharmacies and Providers****
Important Information for Medicaid Beneficiaries

Pursuant to the Medicaid Drug Utilization Review (DUR) provisions that were included in Section 1004 of the Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act, also referred to as the SUPPORT Act, The Department for Vermont Health Access (DVHA) will begin implementing prescription limits for opioids used in treating chronic pain. The SUPPORT ACT Requires standards for the appropriate use of opioids in treating pain. These standards are focused on preventing harm by minimizing opportunities for misuse, abuse, and diversion, and to optimize prevention of addiction and overdose. (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr6/BILLS-115hr6enr.pdf>).

The amount of daily morphine milligram equivalents (MMEs) is frequently used as a risk factor to evaluate potential opioid related harms . The MME conversion factor uses prescription data to calculate the daily MME. The strength per Unit x (Number of Units/Days' Supply) x MME conversion factor = MME/Day. DVHA uses the MME conversion factors provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and a chart has been provided for your reference (attached). More detailed information can be found on their website at <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/guideline.html>

In 2017, DVHA implemented prescription limits on initial short-acting opiate prescriptions. Patients 18 years and older are limited to 50 MME per day and a maximum of 7 days' supply. Patients 17 years of age and younger are limited to 24 MME per day and a maximum of 3 days' supply. These limits remain unchanged. **Effective 05/01/2021**, additional edits apply that include any combination of short and long-acting opioids and members on chronic therapy for non-cancer pain. Members new to opioid therapy (no opioid in claims history after 2/1/21) with a daily MME > 90 per day will require the completion of an opioid safety checklist as a prior authorization. Members with existing claims history in the past 90 days for opioids will require a safety checklist if the daily MME > 120 per day.

For questions, please contact the Change Healthcare Pharmacy Help Desk at 1-844-679-5362. Vermont providers can also send inquiries via email to **PBA_VTHelpdesk@changehealthcare.com**. Thank you for your continued support of Vermont's pharmacy benefits programs.

Nancy J. Hogue, Pharm.D.
Director of Pharmacy Services