

## Pharmacy Formulary Changes for 2019 - *Effective Jan. 1, 2019*

This bulletin provides a summary of the UCare pharmacy formulary changes taking effect Jan. 1, 2019. Plan names have changed for 2019 and are also noted below.

Click the links below to view the documents related to **2019 UCare formularies**:

[UCare Individual & Family Plans \(formerly UCare Choices\)](#)

[UCare Individual & Family Plans with Fairview](#)

[UCare Medicare Plans \(formerly UCare for Seniors\)](#)

[UCare Medicare Plans with Fairview & North Memorial](#)

[UCare Medicare Group Plans](#)

[EssentiaCare](#)

[UCare Minnesota Senior Health Options \(MSHO\) and UCare Connect + Medicare](#)

[Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\): UCare Connect, MinnesotaCare, PMAP, Minnesota Senior Care Plus](#) (formulary is updated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, 2019 formulary will be available January 1)

### 2019 Opioid Edits

Effective Jan. 1, 2019, UCare will be employing several opioid edits in response to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) requirement for enhanced management of the opioid misuse epidemic. The incorporation of these safety edits will exhibit our compliance and participation in the national effort to encourage appropriate opioid prescribing practices and promote the safety of our members. *We expect network prescribers to respond to pharmacy outreach related to opioid safety concerns in a timely manner.*

The specifications of these edits will be uniform across all of UCare's Medicare, Medicaid and Health Exchange plans. A summary of the 2019 opioid overutilization edits is as follows:

- *Opioid-Naïve Patients*: Implementation of a day supply limit to reduce the potential for chronic opioid use or misuse. This will be a hard safety edit (prior authorization) at the pharmacy that limits initial opioid prescription fills for the treatment of acute pain to no more than a 7-day supply. Subsequent fills will not be subject to this safety edit limit. Patients with cancer and those in palliative care, hospice or a LTC setting are excluded from this edit.
- *Long Acting Opioids*: Implementation of a hard safety edit (prior authorization) will be required for all long-acting opioid medications to ensure appropriate utilization and safe prescribing.
- *Formulary Quantity Limits*: Quantity limits will be in place for all opioids on all formularies to reduce the potential for opioid overutilization and misuse.

- For Medicaid and Health Exchange, quantity limits will limit opioid prescriptions to an average daily morphine milligram equivalent (MME) of 90 mg. When the MME is exceeded, a hard safety edit will trigger at the pharmacy and require prior authorization.
- For Medicare members, implementation of a soft and hard formulary-level safety edit for opioids based on the member's cumulative MME at the point-of-sale to prevent potentially unsafe opioid dosing. The soft safety edit (i.e., can be overridden by the pharmacist) will trigger for an average daily MME of  $\geq 90$  mg. In addition, there will be a hard safety edit (i.e., requires prior authorization) that is triggered by reaching an average daily MME of  $\geq 200$  mg.

**High-risk medications (HRM) in the elderly**

- Use of HRM in the elderly continues to be a focus for Medicare.
- Many HRM drugs will be moved up to the non-preferred drug tier on UCare Medicare formularies.
- Members will pay the non-preferred drug tier cost share or the cost of the drug, whichever is less.

**2019 Formulary Updates**

The upcoming 2019 formulary changes noted below are considered high impact. This is not an all-inclusive list of 2019 updates.

**Medicare-related updates:**

UM Additions	Tier Changes (Up-tier)	Additions	Removals	Alternatives to consider
Testosterone Cypionate	Zolpidem (Tier 4)	Colchicine tablets	Restasis	Xiidra
Nuplazid	Meclizine (Tier 4)	Travatan Z	Trulicity	Ozempic, Bydureon, Victoza
Nuedexta	Amitriptyline (Tier 4)	Anoro Ellipta	Namenda XR	Memantine ER, galantamine XR
		Synthroid	Levemir	Lantus, Toujeo

Please note: In the November *health lines*, Nortriptyline was listed as a Tier Change in error - it will remain Tier 2 in 2019.

**Medicaid-related updates:**

UM Additions	Additions	Removals	Alternatives to consider
Synagis (new starts only)	Esomeprazole (with step)	Venlafaxine ER tablets*	Venlafaxine ER capsules
	Buprenorphine patch	Hydrocortisone valyrate & butyrate	Betamethasone valerate, fluocinolone, mometasone
	Colchicine	Xiidra	Restasis
	Amitiza	Asacol HD	Mesalamine ER

\*Venlafaxine ER capsules will remain on the formulary.

In addition, the Medicaid line of business will have an expanded list of covered over-the-counter (OTC) products (500+ additional National Drug Codes).

**Health Exchange-related updates:**

<b>UM Additions</b>	<b>Additions</b>
Exjade	Trintellix
Ferriprox	Lyrica (with PA)
Jadenu	Soliqua

<b>Removals</b>	<b>Alternatives to consider</b>
Premarin cream	Estradiol cream, estradiol tabs
Aubagio, Betaseron, Extavia	Avonex, glatiramer, Plegridy
Zepatier, Eplclusa	Mavyret, Vosevi
Asacol HD	Mesalamine ER

**Treatments for Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)**

For 2019, UCare will cover only Mavyret and Vosevi for all lines of business. Prior authorization will be required for both Mavyret and Vosevi.

**Diabetic Testing Supplies**

One Touch Verio and One Touch Ultra meters and test strips will be the only covered testing products on formulary for all lines of business – Medicare, Medicaid and Exchange.

**Member and Provider Communication**

In late October through November, UCare sent letters to members and providers impacted by formulary removals, added Prior Authorization and up-tiered drugs, to facilitate proactive review and treatment adjustments, if appropriate, prior to the next calendar year. The goal of our 2019 changes is to enhance the safe use of medications and offer the most clinically and cost effective therapy for our members.

**Questions?**

If you have further questions, please call UCare’s Provider Assistance Center at 612-676-3300 or 1-888-531-1493 toll free or visit [ucare.org/providers](http://ucare.org/providers).