

## News and Information

UPDATED: April 10, 2020

*NOTE: The information under "Access to Medication" has been updated to reflect current guidance. As this situation is changing rapidly, please refer to the [UCare COVID-19 Provider FAQs web page](#) for the latest information and future updates related to Pharmacy coverage and other COVID-19 topics.*

### UCare Pharmacy Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

UCare's Pharmacy Department has been closely monitoring the COVID-19 developments and taking appropriate action to ensure our members have access to medication.

The following information outlines UCare's response to date related to accessing medications during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Access to Medication

- 1. Early Refills** - UCare is waiving "refill too soon" requirements on medications for members in our Individual & Family Plans and Medicare plans. We have worked closely with our pharmacy benefit manager, Express Scripts, to allow pharmacies to override refill too soon rejections at the pharmacy to allow early refills. This change went into place the week of March 16, 2020. There have been no changes to requirements for State Public Programs.
- 2. Encouraging 90-day Prescription Fills and Mail Order Services As Appropriate** - Beginning April 9, 2020, State Public Program members will be allowed to fill 90-day supplies for maintenance medications. State Public Program members will be charged one copay, if applicable, if they fill a 90-day prescription. This 90-day benefit does not apply to controlled substances or specialty drugs. Medicare and Individual & Family Plan members may ask their health care provider for a 90-day supply of maintenance medications and are encouraged to use Express Scripts mail order services to minimize exposure. Members may contact Express Scripts mail order by phone at 1-877-567-6320 or login to the ESI member portal at [express-scripts.com](https://www.express-scripts.com). Prescribers e-prescribe through Express Scripts Home Delivery pharmacy. Express Scripts mail order is not an available pharmacy for State Public Program members.
- 3. Additional Delivery Options through Retail Pharmacies** – Express Scripts has reached a temporary agreement with retail pharmacies to provide home delivery of prescriptions to all UCare members. Typically, only pharmacies credentialed as mail order in the Express Scripts pharmacy network are contractually permitted to mail prescriptions. However, Express Scripts is granting these pharmacies a limited delivery exception and will permit them to provide free home delivery of prescriptions to UCare members in a manner that would otherwise be prohibited. This temporary agreement is solely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will be revisited periodically to determine if it is still necessary. The UCare Pharmacy Department will continue to assess the situation and will provide updates as additional information is known.

Members should contact their retail pharmacy for details about any delivery services options they may be offering. The service may not be available at all locations. Retail pharmacies may have restrictions on the types of prescriptions that are eligible for home delivery.

## Monitoring Treatments in Development or Clinical Trial

UCare is monitoring treatments that are currently undergoing clinical investigation and will ensure appropriate access to these therapies if they are FDA approved.

UCare is monitoring utilization of hydroxychloroquine, chloroquine and azithromycin to ensure appropriate use of these medications and that members using these medications for FDA-approved diagnoses will continue to have access.

## Monitoring Drug Shortages

UCare is monitoring drug shortages that are the result of the COVID-19 pandemic and is taking appropriate action to expand formulary coverage as appropriate.

As of March 2020, UCare has been made aware of an albuterol inhaler shortage, and we have expanded coverage of formulary albuterol inhaler products for all lines of business. This will help ensure access to this important drug during this critical time. Please reference the table below for formulary albuterol products.

## Formulary Status of Critical Drugs

UCare has received inquiries from providers on formulary coverage status of drugs that treat underlying respiratory conditions. UCare has compiled a grid of formulary products below that lists out products for these conditions.

As a reminder, UCare follows the Minnesota Department of Human Services' Preferred Drug List for coverage of inhaler products for our Medicaid line of business.

UCare's formularies can be accessed at [www.ucare.org/providers](http://www.ucare.org/providers).

	Medicaid	Medicare	Individual and Family Plans
Short-acting Bronchodilators	Albuterol HFA, Ventolin, Proair HFA, Proar Respiclick, Xopenex HFA, Albuterol nebulizer solution	Albuterol HFA, Ventolin, Proair HFA, Proar Respiclick, Proventil, Xopenex HFA, Albuterol nebulizer solution	Albuterol HFA, Ventolin, Proair HFA, Proar Respiclick, Xopenex HFA, Albuterol nebulizer solution
Long-acting Bronchodilators (LABA) Inhalers	Serevent Diskus	Striverdi Respimat	Brovana
Inhaled Corticosteroids (ICS) Inhalers	Asmanex Twisthaler, Flovent HFA/Diskus, Pulmicort	Asmanex HFA/Twisthaler, Qvar Redihaler,	Asmanex HFA/Twisthaler, Flovent HFA/Diskus
Combination LABA/ICS Inhalers	Advair HFA, Wixela Inhub, Dulera, Symbicort	Advair HFA/Diskus, Breo Ellipta, Dulera, Fluticasone-Salmoterol, Wixela Inhub	Breo Ellipta, Dulera, Fluticasone-Salmoterol, Symbicort
Long-acting Muscarinic Inhalers (LAMA)	Spiriva, Spiriva Respimat, Tudorza Pressair	Incruse Ellipta, Spiriva, Spiriva Respimat	Incruse Ellipta, Spiriva, Spiriva Respimat
Short-acting Muscarinic Agents	Atrovent HFA, Ipratropium nebulizer solution	Atrovent HFA, Ipratropium nebulizer solution	Atrovent HFA, Ipratropium nebulizer solution

## 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 [www.ucare.org/providers](http://www.ucare.org/providers).