



August 2003

Prior Authorization No Longer Needed for Smoking Cessation Aids

Physicians who wish to prescribe smoking cessation treatment medications for Health Partners/Senior Partners members no longer require prior authorization and member enrollment in a Stop Smoking educational program. However, this educational benefit is still available for our members through the Health Partners Disease Management (DM) department. The DM department encourages all physicians to stress that the combination of education and prescription product use contributes to greater likelihood of successful smoking cessation. PCPs can call the DM department on the member's behalf, or the member may call directly at 215-991-4250 to voluntarily enroll in this program.

When Prescribing DME Items for Members An Important Note about Providers and Authorizations

In the past few months, a number of our members have expressed concern about being directed by their PCP, specialist or hospital discharge planner to their local pharmacies for DME equipment and supplies. They arrived to find that the pharmacies would not honor their DME prescriptions.

If a member/patient requires a DME item or supply, please direct him/her to Health Partners participating DME providers in their area. If you would like a list of participating DME providers in your area, please call Utilization Management at 215-849-3513, or the Provider Services Helpline at 215-991-4350 or 888-991-9023.

DME items have not been covered under Health Partners pharmacy benefit since March of 2001.* Key points to remember when prescribing DME items for Health Partners or Senior Partners members:

- All **purchased** DME items or supplies (such as diapers, underpads, glucometers, nebulizers), homecare **visits** (not including home shift care or home health aide services), and transportation services less than a reimbursement value of \$500 per claim line DO NOT require prior authorization from Health Partners' Utilization Management (UM) department.
- All DME **rentals** require prior authorization, regardless of reimbursement value.

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When Prescribing DME Items for Members An Important Note about Providers and Authorizations (*Continued*)

- If any portion of a customized DME device has a reimbursement value greater than \$500, an authorization is required for the entire DME device.
- All special items which do not have their own HCPCS code (such as E1399) require prior authorization, regardless of reimbursement value.
- Authorizations are based on medical necessity and benefit coverage.

If you have questions, please call the Health Partners UM department at 215-849-3513. Providers who need help with urgent issues after business hours (such as discharge planning placements, home care, DME, and transportation) can contact the Health Partners Member Relations staff at 215-849-9600 or 1-800-553-0784. Member Relations will notify the UM nurse case manager on-call as applicable. **We appreciate your assistance in helping your patients.**

**Exception: DME items such as test strips, lancets, syringes are still processed under the pharmacy benefit. For these supplies, members should be directed to their closest participating retail pharmacy.*