

Care Management FAQ

What is a Clinical Review and why does my prescription need one?

As your pharmacy benefit manager, we are stewards of your healthcare in partnership with your prescriber, and we take that responsibility very seriously. Your health, safety, and well-being are our priority. That's why we make sure you're getting the best medications for your health conditions at the most affordable price. There are times we need to consult with your prescriber to discuss your treatment plan and alternatives that may be more beneficial for you. In many cases, EmpiRx Health will simply request information from the prescriber's office for our review to confirm the prescription meets current clinical guidelines for safe and effective use. This process is a Clinical Review. A Clinical Review can be opened by a member, the pharmacist at the pharmacy, or through your prescriber's office.

Below are examples of why this Clinical Review and prescription change can occur. **In every case, your prescriber has the final say in determining the best prescription for you.**

- Certain medications are limited to specific quantities due to current clinical guidelines or to promote safety and prevent overuse.
- A lower-cost clinically appropriate prescription is available for your condition that should be used and evaluated before the higher-cost prescription is provided.
- High-cost, high-risk medications require additional information from your prescriber or consultation to confirm appropriateness and safety. Your therapy may also need monitoring of your health condition and potential side effects.
- Certain medications including opioids, benzodiazepines, oncology, sleep aids, and contraceptives, begin with a starter dose for the first fill to ensure appropriate use, eliminate waste, and promote safety. This allows for monitoring of side effects and your health condition and help prevent addiction.

EmpiRx Health was chosen as your pharmacy benefit manager because of our focus on your health and safety. EmpiRx Health pharmacists ensure you receive the most appropriate medication for your condition by monitoring your therapy through prescriber consultation. EmpiRx Health's goal is to confirm the safety and effectiveness of prescriptions for our members. In the event a prescription is changed, we make the process seamless for you by working behind the scenes with your prescriber. You will always be notified by either your prescriber or EmpiRx Health in the event of a change.

Will I be denied my necessary medication?

The Clinical Review process ensures that you receive the safest and most effective medication to treat your condition that is covered under your plan. If your medication is not covered as prescribed, you can ask your prescriber about alternatives that are covered. You will receive the alternative for the plan's copayment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is EmpiRx limiting the amount of medication I can receive?

This is a safety measure to ensure you receive the appropriate amount of a single drug. A review is performed at the pharmacy to confirm the prescription is within appropriate limits based on FDA-approved dosing. If the prescription exceeds approved limits, your prescriber can adjust the amount and resubmit the prescription to the pharmacy. Or you, your pharmacist, or your prescriber can open a Clinical Review.

Why is my prescription being changed to a generic or other alternative?

In some cases, we've determined with your prescriber that a first-line or lower-cost medication is available prior to using a second-line or higher-cost prescription within the same category. The list of categories is developed by prescribers, pharmacists, and other experienced medical personnel. If one or more medications you are currently taking is affected by this protocol, you and your doctor will receive a letter with additional information.

As part of this clinical protocol, we always encourage members to try generics when they are available. This helps reduce plan costs, including lower copays for you and your dependents.

Your complete prescription history is not always shared between pharmacy benefit companies. We may not have all relevant information on file to know if you tried an alternative therapy prior to becoming an EmpiRx Health member.

EmpiRx Health clinicians work directly with your prescriber to gather additional information, including details of your previous experience with first-line alternatives. This information is extremely important for your health and safety. If your prescriber confirms your prior history with first-line alternatives and why they did not work, EmpiRx Health documents the information and the original prescription is dispensed. Our responsibility is to be a trusted clinical advisor on your behalf; however, **your prescriber always makes the final decision.**

What happens if my prescriber cannot provide confirmation of the first-line alternative?

If written documentation cannot be provided, then a brief typed letter of medical necessity is requested. This letter can be used as attestation that you have already tried alternatives. In most cases, a 30-day trial of the alternative medication is sufficient. After the 30-day trial, if you or your prescriber is not satisfied with the outcome, the original medication may be filled at the next refill.

Why is my prescription limited to a short day supply when our benefit allows up to a 90-day supply?

To ensure appropriate use of certain newly prescribed medications, eliminate waste, and promote safety, EmpiRx Health provides the following Starter Dose Programs:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Starter Dose Programs

Opioids

Opioids are pain medications such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine, or methadone that have a high potential for abuse and addiction. The Opioid Starter Dose Program requires members to fill a 7-day supply before receiving a 30-day supply. EmpiRx Health will only cover prescriptions for opioid medications up to a maximum of a 30-day supply.

Oncology

Oncology medications are used to treat cancer. They can have many unpleasant side effects that may affect a patient's ability to take them. The Oncology Starter Dose Program requires patients to fill two 14-day supplies before receiving a 30-day supply. An EmpiRx Health pharmacist will call the patient shortly after treatment begins to discuss any side effects. Our pharmacist will work with the patient and the prescriber to adjust the dosage or consider an alternative medication.

Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines are anxiety medications that are prescribed frequently; however, these medications have a high potential for abuse and addiction. When these medications are taken with other medications, such as opioids, patients can have a greater chance of addiction. The Benzodiazepine Starter Dose Program requires members to fill two 14-day supplies before receiving a 30-day supply.

Sleep Aids

Sleep aids are medications that help patients have a good night's sleep. Although the directions for most of these medications say that they should be used for no more than 10 days, patients often become dependent on them to sleep. The Sleep Aid Starter Dose Program requires members to fill two 10-day supplies before they receive a 30-day supply.

Contraceptives

Many people who start taking a new oral contraceptive (birth control pill) will fill prescriptions for a 3-month supply only to switch to another product after a month due to side effects. This wastes money for your plan and can lead to higher costs for you. The Contraceptive Starter Dose Program requires members to fill one 28-day supply before receiving an 84-day supply. This program only affects oral medications that come in 28-day packaging.

QUESTIONS

We're always available for you. If you have any questions or require additional information about your specific coverage, contact us toll-free at <1-877-241-7123>/TDD 1-888-907-0020.