

December 20, 2024

UPDATE TO "VDP CHANGES FOR COVID-19 POST-PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY"

On Aug. 19, 2024, HHSC published the "VDP Changes For COVID-19 Post-Public Health Emergency" notice. This update clarifies some of those policies.

KEY DETAILS

1. Topic: Pharmacist Prescribing At-Home COVID-19 Tests Ending (Jan. 1, 2025)

On Aug. 19, 2024, VDP directed MCOs to end coverage of at-home COVID-19 tests without a prescription starting Jan. 1, 2025. VDP clarifies that we will end the "dummy NPI" availability when a member does not have a prescription for an at-home COVID-19 test on Jan. 1, 2025. MCOs must also end the availability and usage of the "dummy NPI" and only allow payment of at-home COVID-19 tests on the VDP formulary prescribed by a licensed prescriber, effective Jan. 1, 2025. See MCO notices from Dec. 23, 2021, and Feb. 3, 2022, describing the "dummy code" requirement for at-home COVID-19 tests.

2. Topic: Change to Patient Vaccination Age at Pharmacy (Jan. 1, 2025)

VDP notified MCOs on Aug. 19, 2024, that the age for pharmacist-administered vaccines is reverting to current state law due to the ending of the federal law. VDP directed MCOs to ensure the age edits for these vaccines comply with state law. VDP clarifies that COVID-19 vaccines will not be available in Medicaid for children aged 18 and younger, as the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program covers these. MCOs must deny pharmacy claims for COVID-19 vaccines for this age group as MCOs already do for other vaccines for children. VDP covers fully FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines for adults 19 years and older enrolled in Medicaid. MCOs must also cover these, adhering to the VDP formulary, through the pharmacy benefit for adults ages 19 and older and reimburse the pharmacy for the administration and product. This notice does not speak to COVID-19 vaccine coverage through the medical benefit.

3. Topic: CHIP co-pay reinstatement not applicable to COVID-19 vaccines

VDP notified MCOs on Aug. 19, 2024, that due to the ending of federal law, we will reinstate CHIP co-pays for COVID-19 vaccination. However, COVID-19 vaccines are preventative care and do not require a CHIP co-pay. MCOs must not apply CHIP co-pays to COVID-19 vaccines in the pharmacy benefit.