

First Script Prescription Benefit News for Workers' Compensation

August 2020

Quarterly Program Update, Q2, 2020

Each quarter First Script® will begin providing an update to your First Script program. This information is meant to provide a review of changes to drugs included in our standard formulary, prior authorization Smart PAs, and price opportunists. For additional information, please contact your First Script pharmacist at askthepharmacist@cvty.com.

First Script Standard Formulary

The First Script standard formulary was developed using guidance from the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) and current best practices. All updates to the standard formulary are approved by First Script's Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee. Some of our most recent updates include:

- To remove ranitidine products from the First Script standard formulary, following a request of manufacturers earlier in the year that they withdraw these products from the market. In early 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requested that all manufacturers of ranitidine, (Zantac®) withdraw these products from the market.
- To remove a 7-day supply limitation for two anti-anxiety medications, hydroxyzine and buspirone, on the First Script Global Standard Formulary. Note: A 7-day supply limitation remains in place for anti-anxiety medications in the benzodiazepine category.

Drug	Action	Formulary	Reason
Ranitidine	Removed	First Script Standard	FDA Warning – NDMA Impurity
Elyxyb®	Considered	First Script Standard	Preliminary discussion pending release of pricing and US market availability.
Hydroxyzine	7-day limit removed	First Script Standard	P&T voted to remove a 7-day supply limitation.
Buspirone	7-day limit removed	First Script Standard	P&T voted to remove a 7-day supply limitation.

Smart PA

Smart PA is an enhanced prior authorization process that provides claims examiners with clinical recommendations to assist in prescription-decision making. Unlike traditional prior authorizations, Smart PA can give recommendations based on clinical guidelines, state-based requirements, or cost-considerations. This quarter there was an update based on the emerging treatment of COVID-19.

Drug	Smart PA Language
Dexamethasone	Dexamethasone products in tablet and liquid forms are included on the First Script standard formulary with limitations of use for less than a 90-day supply in the preceding 365 days. It should be noted that dexamethasone is not recommended for chronic steroid therapy and the medical appropriateness in relation to the work injury may need to be determined.

Price Opportunist

The Price Opportunist list is a clinical program to identify drugs at the National Drug Code (NDC) level of medications that do not provide greater clinical value compared to similarly effective but more inexpensive therapeutic alternatives. The list is divided into drug categories such as compound kits, combo paks, private-label topical analgesic (PLTA), or price outliers.

- **Compound kits and combo paks** are multi-ingredient items that a manufacturer combines but all too frequently, the components are overly expensive compared to alternatives or prescribing items individually.
- **PLTAs** are topical agents that usually combine multiple ingredients, that are often available over-the-counter (OTC), which are then marked up by the manufacturer to oftentimes exorbitant prices.
- **Price outliers** are medications with inflated costs relative to medications in the same drug level.

For instance, an ibuprofen 800 mg tablet at \$12.00 would reject compared to an ibuprofen 800 mg tablet at \$0.12. To address all of the drug categories in the Price Opportunist list, the NDCs are set to auto-deny at the point-of-sale without a prior authorization. First Script maintains and updates the list quarterly for new additions or removal of agents that have had significant price reductions. At the conclusion of the first half of 2020 there were 333 medications added to the current Price Opportunist list. These included:

PO Drug Category	Product example	Description
Compound kit	Lidocidex I injection	Compound Kit @ \$500 +/- per unit
Combo pak	Inflatherm Pak	Combination Pak @ \$3800 (diclofenac tablet, menthol/camphor gel)
Oral agents	Chlorzoxazone Tablets	Oral chlorzoxazone tablets @ \$24/tablet
Price outlier	Azithromycin Pak	Generic Z Pak – azithromycin @ \$280
PLTA	CBD Kings	CBD + camphor/menthol, methyl salicylate patch @ \$40/patch
Topicals	Wound Dressings	Many at \$500 and up per sheet

There were 503 medications falling from the current Price Opportunist list, with all of them coming from the ‘Outlier’ drug category. These subtractions were due mainly to medications becoming inactive (meaning they are no longer being produced by the manufacturer), the price of certain NDCs have decreased, or the price for the drug level for the whole has increased causing the medications to no longer be considered outliers. This quarter there was a significant decrease in the number of certain NDCs for anti-depressants and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen or naproxen that fell from the list due to a newly inactive status from the previous quarter.



Governmental Activity by State

Find out more about the governmental updates and potential changes currently being proposed in your state

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