

## Subject: Express Scripts and CVS to Limit First Time Opioid Fills

Express Scripts (ESI) and CVS Caremark have agreed to limit first time opioid prescriptions to seven days.<sup>1,2</sup>

First Script has seen several states begin to institute specific opioid controls that are relevant to workers' compensation. As such, we continue to apply these rules where justifiable within current jurisdictional rule sets. First Script is able to implement each state's prescribing rules as they're confirmed, and consults on specific edits to formulary and/or regulation changes with our customers.

### Dates changes and their anticipated effects

ESI made their changes effective September 1 this year. We wanted our clients to know that we don't anticipate any impact to your injured workers. We manage rules and drug lists that meet state and client specific guidelines, and thus, aren't affected by ESI-specific rules.

CVS will make their new policy and other rules effective February 1, 2018. One of CVS's new rules is that immediate-release opioids will need to be used before extended-release options. In their press release, CVS has stated they will offer a, "robust safe opioid use education program highlighting opioid safety and the dangers of addiction."<sup>3</sup> The program will inform patients about the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) evidence-based guidelines, the risk of dependence and addiction, keeping medications secure, and how to properly dispose of unused medications.

First Script clients will not experience any impact processing scripts from CVS's new policy. The opioid limitation rule is enforced at their point-of-sale pharmacy; however, First Script's rules will take precedent and in accordance with our clients' drug formularies and state mandated workers' compensation rules.

### Our goal is to reduce the misuse and abuse of opioids

We are hopeful that the changes at CVS and ESI will positively impact opioid misuse and abuse. First Script will continue our proactive focus on mitigating the risks associated with opioid abuse through our various programs.

If you would like more information on how we can help, contact your Account Manager or Account Pharmacist.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.businessinsurance.com/article/00010101/NEWS08/912315285/Express-Scripts-program-to-limit-first-fill-opioid-prescriptions-moves-forward>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.businessinsurance.com/article/20170925/NEWS08/912316041/CVS-pharmacy-to-limit-opioids,-provide-counseling>

<sup>3</sup> <https://cvshealth.com/newsroom/press-releases/cvs-health-fighting-national-opioid-abuse-epidemic-with-enterprise-initiative>