



June 9, 2017

Dear Provider,

As you are aware, opiate overdoses have reached epidemic levels in Maryland. Maryland Physicians Care (MPC) is working with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to reduce the impact of opioids across the State. In conjunction with the other HealthChoice MCOs, MPC will be implementing a new opiate Prior Authorization requirement.

The risk of overdose increases substantially for patients taking more than 90 Morphine Milligram Equivalents (MME) a day. Starting July 1, 2017, MPC will require Prior Authorization for any opiate prescription that would exceed 90 MME per day. Note that this limit is cumulative for all active opiate prescriptions for a member. The limit may also be triggered by opiate prescriptions written by different prescribers. Finally, increased doses of opiates beyond what was originally authorized may require a new Prior Authorization.

It is recommended that before requesting a Prior Authorization, all providers should meet with their patients. Please discuss with your patients the risks of high doses of opiates. Please also discuss mitigation strategies, including alternative treatments for chronic pain.

Additional information on opiate prescribing can be accessed on the MPC website in the Provider section. If you have further questions, please contact Provider Services at 1-800-953-8854. Thank you for the care you provide to our shared patients.

Respectfully,

G. Bruce G. Vanderver, MD, MPH
Chief Medical Officer