



April 28, 2011

Louisiana Treatment Guidelines – Impact to Pharmacy and Other Therapies

After litigation regarding implementation, the Louisiana Office of Workers' Compensation Administration (OWCA) anticipates adoption of a final version of their treatment guidelines. Initial 2011 implementation of the treatment guidelines, through emergency rule-making, was initially enjoined by a court-ordered stay, and OWCA has subsequently pursued adoption through a formal rule-making process. The pending treatment guidelines are a legislatively imposed requirement, pursuant to a 2009 bill, in an attempt to control rising medical costs and establish official standards of care in Louisiana for treatment of several types of injuries. OWCA indicated recently that adoption of the guidelines is imminent, but has yet to give an official implementation date.

The treatment guidelines for each specific body part/region include additional recommendations for ancillary therapies such as pharmacy and also include additional (limited) recommendations on provision of specific durable medical equipment and physical/occupational therapies. Providers are still encouraged to seek preauthorization for non-emergency medical treatments in excess of \$750 (pursuant to a pre-existing requirement in statute) regardless if treatment is in compliance with the new treatment guidelines. Any dispute between provider and payor regarding adherence to treatment guidelines must be resolved by OWCA. Providers are required to use an LWC-WC Form 1009 when requesting a review of prescribed medical treatment that has been denied by the payor.

Copies of the soon-to-be-adopted treatment guidelines, including a list of frequently asked questions provided by OWCA, can be found at: www.laworks.net/WorkersComp/OWC_MedicalGuidelines.asp. Questions related to the overall impact, expectation and implementation of the guidelines should be directed to Sue Newman, RN, Medical Services Manager at 800.201.2494 or snewman@lwc.la.gov.

Pharmacy

The guidelines contain recommendations pertaining to medication use and clearly refer to the prescribing physician's role in determining appropriate utilization of medications in light of the treatment guidelines' optimal and maximum durations. Several specific types of medications are detailed, including opioids, analgesics, NSAIDs, anti-depressants, anti-convulsants and narcotics. These recommendations are targeted at the treating/prescribing physician rather than the dispensing pharmacy or PBM.

DMEPOS and Therapies

The treatment guidelines also contain recommendations concerning the utilization of select ancillary services, including durable medical equipment, medical supplies, and various physical and occupational therapies. Similar to pharmacy, these treatment guidelines are to be utilized by the prescribing/treating physician in creating treatment plans or providing orders for utilization by therapists and/or the injured worker.



Government Affairs Alert



Client Support

As the impact of these treatment guidelines on physician prescribing evolves (for both pharmacy and ancillary services), PMSI can assist interested clients in gaining better insight into how injured workers are impacted by these guidelines. We encourage concerned clients to reach out to their Account Manager to have further discussions regarding how PMSI can provide further information and assistance in ensuring compliance with the pending guidelines upon final adoption.

If you have any questions regarding this alert or any other government-related topic, please contact your dedicated Account Manager. You may also contact our Director of Government Affairs, Kevin Tribout at Kevin.Tribout@pmsionline.com or 813.627.2445.

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