

Upcoming Pharmacy Changes

January 25, 2018

With the New Year, changes are on the horizon for our pharmacy coverage at the University of Louisville. Pharmacy costs increased 10.3% in 2017 and are projected to increase even more in 2018. Rising prescription drug costs affect health insurance premiums. Therefore, our goal is to help contain rising prescription drug costs, as well as to improve healthcare and provide a quality patient experience. With this goal, five new initiatives within our current pharmacy coverage are being implemented effective **April 1, 2018**. These initiatives intend to bring savings to many of our employees.

Most of these initiatives only affect a small portion of our employee population. However, since prescription drug needs can change at any time, we are communicating them to all plan participants. Please take a moment to review the following initiatives.

Initiative 1: New Medications added to Formulary Exclusion List

What does this mean?

Our current prescription drug provider, Express Scripts, provides a [formulary exclusion list](#) every calendar year. A formulary exclusion list provides a list of medications that are not covered because it has been determined by using evidence based medical guidelines, that there is an alternative, generic medication that achieves the same health outcome. While a formulary exclusion list is already in place with our plan, full implementation will be added as of April 1.

How does this affect me?

This affects a small population at the university. Since our plan does not cover medications on this revised exclusion list, if you are using a drug that is on the exclusion list, you will be asked to use a different medication that achieves the same health outcome at a lower cost.

What do I need to do?

If you currently take a medication on the exclusion list, our partners at KY Rx Coalition will be contacting you directly to help guide you through the medication changes. KY Rx Coalition will begin contacting affected employees in March, with all prescriptions moved over by April 1.

Initiative 2: Introducing Step Therapy

What does this mean?

This initiative introduces step therapy for all prescription drugs in our plan. Step therapy helps make sure that you get the best and most reasonable priced drug available for you. Basically, you try less expensive, generic drugs before 'stepping up' to drugs that cost more. You would then progress up through the steps as needed (if needed at all) during your treatment. Many will find that the step one medication works well and will not need to move to a different medication. Please note, there is still always the option for a physician to override this process

with a preauthorization request, if they feel it is in the BEST interest of the patient to skip directly to a specific drug.

How does this affect me?

This will affect any employee on our health insurance plan with prescription drugs **prescribed after April 1**. New prescriptions will need to go through the step therapy process. Current prescriptions are grandfathered in, so you will not have to change any current prescriptions. The only exception to grandfathered prescriptions is the medications on the formulary exclusion list, as mentioned in Initiative 1. You can refer to this list to see if you are affected and work with the KY Rx Coalition.

What do I need to do?

Keep this new step therapy in mind throughout the year as you visit any medical professionals. Physicians are well aware of the step therapy process, and it can save some time if you let them know your insurance requires this. As mentioned previously, if you are on a medication on the exclusion list, you can work with the KY Rx Coalition.

Initiative 3: Implementing Quantity Limits

What does this mean?

Utilization management puts quantity limits in place for common prescription drugs. This will help to avoid misuse of prescription drugs and protect the safety of the patient. As with some of the other initiatives, a physician still has the final say. If the provider feels the dosage is necessary for the individual, they can submit a preauthorization for the patient to receive the higher dose.

How does this affect me?

If you have a prescription drug that has a quantity limit put on it after April 1, you will be notified by your pharmacy the next time you fill it. You will be provided the amount up to the quantity limit at that time, but if you feel you need the higher quantity, we encourage you to contact the KY Rx Coalition to work with your doctor to get the required preauthorization.

What do I need to do?

You can contact KY Rx Coalition for any questions or assistance with this change.

Initiative 4: SAVEON Program

What does this mean?

The SaveOn program takes advantage of some components of the Affordable Care Act where manufacturers make savings available for co-pay assistance. This is for certain specialty drugs filled by mail order with Accredo Specialty Pharmacy, and reduces the co-pay the employee is responsible for to \$0. This is a win-win for the employee and UofL.

How does this affect me?

As mentioned, this is for certain medications that come from Accredo Specialty Pharmacy. Currently, this affects around 100 employees. If you are on one of these medications, your co-pay will now be \$0.

What do I need to do?

You will need to enroll with SaveOn if you are on one of these specialty drugs. SaveOn will be reaching out to each affected employee to help you to enroll. This outreach from SaveOn will begin in February. If you try to refill your prescription after April 1 and you have not signed up with SaveOn yet, the pharmacy will notify you at that time that you will need to enroll.

Initiative 5: Safeguard Program

What does this mean?

Express Scripts offers Safeguard programs that help participants gain access to new therapies utilizing specialty nurses and pharmacists at Accredo Specialty Pharmacy. UofL currently participates in Safeguard 1, which covers Hepatitis C, oncology and cholesterol care. Beginning April 1, the university will be adding Safeguards 2 and 3, which covers inflammatory care, and multiple sclerosis. Due to the severity of these diseases and the high cost of the medications, these safeguard programs use the 'high touch' method to make sure the patients are adhering to their medication therapy and achieve the desired outcomes.

How does this affect me?

If you are taking medication covered by this program, the specialized nurses and pharmacists from Accredo will contact you to provide assistance in reaching better outcomes.

Questions?

These five initiatives will be effective April 1, 2018. If you have any questions about them, please do not hesitate to contact our partners at KY Rx Coalition, either via phone at 1-855-218-5979 or email KYRx@uky.edu. Additional information can also be found on the [UofL Pharmacy webpage](#).

By implementing these programs and other initiatives, such as encouraging our employees to take advantage of preventive screenings, our goal is to be good stewards of our healthcare resources and provide our employees with the best medical and pharmacy care available.