



To: AmeriHealth Caritas DC Providers
Date: March 1, 2021
Subject: **REMINDER: Opioid Medication Prescribing Limits**

Summary: AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia (DC) is reminding providers of its limits to prescribed opioid medications to help address the ongoing epidemic of drug abuse and deaths from overdoses.

Impact

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports overdoses from prescription opioids are a driving factor in the 15-year increase in opioid overdose deaths. Since 1999, the number of prescription opioids sold in the United States has nearly quadrupled, yet there has not been an overall change in the amount of pain that Americans report. Death rates from prescription opioids — such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, and methadone — have more than quadrupled since 1999. Additional information can be found at www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/index.html.

To address this crisis, AmeriHealth Caritas DC implemented changes starting in 2017 to limit the quantity and day supplies covered under the plan's pharmacy benefit. The prescription limits below were developed based on both the cumulative monthly morphine milligram equivalents (MME) and the day supplies being requested at the time.

Action

Starting on January 29, 2018, the plan stopped paying for prescriptions greater than 90MME and/or seven-day supplies for any **new starts**.

Questions

If you have any questions about this communication, please contact Tracey Davis, PharmD, Director of Pharmacy, at 202-349-3578.