

SECTION 7 PHARMACY

The purpose of this section is to outline Commonwealth Care Alliance's pharmacy program, including details on our formulary and prior authorization. Also included is a description of Commonwealth Care Alliance's Step Therapy Program, Medication Therapy Management Program, and Mail Order Program.

7-1 Commonwealth Care Alliance Pharmacy Program

Commonwealth Care Alliance has contracted with [Express Scripts, Inc. \(ESI\)](#), a national pharmacy benefits management (PBM) company, to administer the pharmacy benefit on Commonwealth Care Alliance's behalf. Commonwealth Care Alliance has worked with its primary care partners to identify those retail pharmacies in the neighborhoods of the primary care sites with whom Commonwealth Care Alliance's primary care providers have established relationships and members can access easily. Commonwealth Care Alliance has ensured that each of these pharmacies is a part of the ESI network of retail pharmacies. In addition to many smaller independent pharmacies, Commonwealth Care Alliance's pharmacy network through ESI will also include CVS and Walgreen's.

Formulary

Commonwealth Care Alliance has established a formulary with the expert assistance of the PBM that aims to provide prescribing providers with both a broad range of options for treatment while promoting the most cost-effective drug choices. Commonwealth Care Alliance will cover the drugs listed in the formulary as long as they are medically necessary. [Click here](#) to access the formulary list on our website.

Prior Authorization

Certain medications require prior authorization (prior approval) before a pharmacy can fill the prescription. Clinicians may contact ESI and request prior authorization by calling 1-800-417-8164. If prior authorization is not granted, the drug may not be covered.

[Click here](#) to access the list of medications that require prior authorization on our website.

Step Therapy Program

In support of efforts to provide patients with the best medical care at a reasonable cost, Commonwealth Care Alliance has worked closely with health care professionals to develop step therapy programs. These programs initiate drug therapy for a medical condition with the most cost-effective and safest drug and step up through a sequence of alternative drug therapies as a preceding treatment option fails.

Step therapy applies coverage rules at the pharmacy point of service (e.g. a first-line drug must be tried before a second-line drug can be used). If a prescription is written for a second-line drug and the step therapy rule was not met, the claim is rejected. A message is transmitted to the pharmacy indicating that the patient should be treated with the first-line drug before coverage of the second-line drug can be authorized. If a patient has been stabilized on a second-line prior to enrolling with Commonwealth Care Alliance, the new patient is allowed to remain on the second-line drug, per Commonwealth Care Alliance's transition policy.

[Click here](#) to review the Commonwealth Care Alliance transition policy. [Click here](#) to access step therapy program information on our website.

Mail Order Program

In addition to accessing medications from local retail pharmacies in the network, members and providers will also have the ability to utilize ESI's mail order program for maintenance medications. It is anticipated that this will assist elders and their caregivers with receiving medication refills and greater quantity supply for those medications used on a prolonged basis.

Medication Therapy Management Program

Commonwealth Care Alliance offers medication therapy management (MTM) programs to patients who take a number of different drugs, have chronic diseases (such as asthma, diabetes, or chronic heart failure), and have high annual drug costs. If your patient meets these three qualifications, they may be eligible for extra help in taking their medications, including extra education, and one-on-one meetings with clinical pharmacists in their local drug store. The MTM program was designed by doctors and pharmacists to help us provide the best possible care to our members by better managing their medications.

If a provider receives an MTM program letter from Commonwealth Care Alliance, please take a minute to review the clinical recommendations. If the provider is in agreement with them, please proceed to discuss these recommendations with the patient and make appropriate changes. A Commonwealth Care Alliance case manager will be in contact with the patient's care manager at your practice to follow up and obtain feedback on the recommendations.