

NEW YORK  
state department of  
**HEALTH**

Nirav R. Shah, M.D., M.P.H.  
Commissioner

Sue Kelly  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

**RETRODUR INTERVENTION NOTICE: QUETIAPINE PRESCRIBER LETTER**

May 16, 2012

Dear Prescriber,

The New York State Medicaid Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Program retrospectively reviews the prescribing and dispensing of outpatient prescription medications in order to ensure that prescriptions represent best practices, are medically necessary, and are not likely to result in adverse medical outcomes. At the October 20, 2011 DUR Board Meeting, the Board reviewed the utilization of immediate-release quetiapine (Seroquel®) and extended-release quetiapine (Seroquel XR®) within the NYS Medicaid program.

After considering clinical information, utilization data, and safety concerns regarding off-label use of quetiapine, the DUR Board approved the following action:

- **Prior authorization for quetiapine utilization of less than 100 mg per day.**

It is important to note that low doses are not recommended except for the elderly / debilitated, patients with liver disease, or patients titrating over a 7 day period. The recommended dosage range as listed in the product package insert is 150 mg to 800 mg per day.

The low-dose limitation and prior authorization process is based on review of FDA-approved indications and dosing, as well as peer reviewed medical literature. Based on two retrospective cohort studies and several case reports, use of low-dose quetiapine does not prevent adverse events such as weight gain, fatal hepatotoxicity, and acute respiratory failure as these events have been reported at low doses. In addition to safety concerns, quetiapine has been noted to have abuse potential based on multiple reports describing misuse based on its anxiolytic and sedative side effects.

New York State Medicaid pharmacy claims data indicate that you have written prescription(s) for low dose quetiapine (i.e. less than 100 mg per day). In presenting this information to you, the DUR Program recognizes that safe and effective pharmacotherapy depends on the assessment of the patient's entire clinical profile. We ask that you consider the information provided regarding low-dose quetiapine prescribing for your patients.

For additional information on the DUR Program and Frequency/Quantity/Duration parameters, please visit: [http://nyhealth.gov/health\\_care/medicaid/program/dur/index.htm](http://nyhealth.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/dur/index.htm).

Thank you for your professional assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

John F. Naioti, Jr., R.Ph.  
DUR Program Manager

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2. Seroquel XR® (quetiapine fumarate extended-release) prescribing information. AstraZeneca. January 2011. Available at: <http://hcp.seroquelxr.com/?source=891>. Accessed February 16, 2011.
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