Dear Prescriber,

The New York State Medicaid Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Program, in collaboration with the State University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, retrospectively reviews the prescribing and dispensing of outpatient prescription medications in order to ensure that prescriptions are appropriate, medically necessary, and not likely to result in adverse medical outcomes. This is particularly important if multiple providers are identified for one patient.

During a recent review of medication profiles, for the month of February 2014 and looking back three months (November 2013 to January 2014), the Medicaid beneficiary with a diagnosis of asthma identified within received duplication of therapy with short-acting beta-agonists (SABA) via two different delivery methods, metered dose inhaler (MDI) and nebulizer solution. Duplication of therapy was defined as receiving consecutive months of both SABA MDIs and nebulizer solution. This duplication of therapy potentially may indicate poorly controlled asthma.

Current asthma guidelines suggest that increasing use of SABAs or using a SABA more than two days per week for symptom relief may indicate inadequate control of asthma and a need to initiate or increase the dose of inhaled corticosteroid therapy or other controller medication (See Chart on next page).\(^1\)\(^3\)\(^6\)

Verifying proper inhaler technique may also be beneficial to identify a cause for poor asthma control. Concomitant use of the two different delivery methods for SABAs is not supported in the current asthma treatment guidelines.\(^1\)\(^3\)\(^6\) Both MDIs and nebulized treatments are equally efficacious when used correctly.\(^4\)\(^5\)

Thank you for your professional assistance in this matter.

For questions or comments, contact the Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Program at:

DUR@Health.State.NY.US

Sincerely,

John F. Naioti, Jr., R.Ph.
Manager, Drug Utilization Review Program

References


HEALTH.NY.GOV
facebook.com/NYSDOH
twitter.com/HealthNYGov