

**DUR INTERVENTION NOTICE: SECOND GENERATION ANTIPSYCHOTICS UTILIZED IN
THE TREATMENT OF MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER**

December 12, 2014

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 are appropriate, medically necessary, and are not likely to result in adverse medical outcomes.

The New York State Medicaid DUR Board recently reviewed Second Generation Antipsychotic medications (SGAs) utilized in the treatment of major depressive disorder (MDD). The Board recommended an intervention at the prescriber level addressing items discussed at the meeting. The meeting summary is available on the Department's website:

http://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/dur/meetings/2014/index.htm.

New York State Medicaid pharmacy claims data indicate that you may have prescribed an SGA for the treatment of MDD. Please consider the following information before prescribing SGAs for the treatment of MDD, as the DUR Program is concerned that there may be utilization of these medications that is not consistent with FDA-approved labeling or supported by drug information resources as defined for this program in federal law (i.e. official compendia).

- **Use of specific SGAs that have not been approved for treatment of MDD, in the absence of any other psychiatric comorbidities**

At this time, not all SGAs are approved for treatment of MDD. The SGA products *with* FDA approval for this indication are aripiprazole (Abilify®), olanzapine (Zyprexa®) in combination with fluoxetine, the combination product olanzapine/fluoxetine (Symbyax®), and quetiapine extended-release (Seroquel XR®). Of note, these products are approved for use as *adjunct* therapy for MDD.

- **Use of SGAs as monotherapy for MDD, in the absence of any other psychiatric comorbidities**

At this time, there are no SGAs with FDA approval as monotherapy for MDD, and only quetiapine extended-release (Seroquel XR®) has compendia support for use as monotherapy in the treatment of MDD.

The DUR Program recognizes that safe and effective pharmacotherapy depends on the assessment of the patient's entire clinical profile. In doing so, please consider the information provided above regarding the prescribing of SGAs for your patients.

Thank you for your professional assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

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