

Quick Points



October 21, 2010

Electronic prescribing

Electronic prescribing, or e-prescribing, is the computer-based electronic transmission and filling of a new or renewed prescription by a clinician qualified to prescribe medications such as a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant to a retail or mail-order pharmacy. It also allows the provider to validate a patient's eligibility, drug formulary, benefit coverage and review a member's drug history.

Effective November 1, 2010, e-prescribing will be a standard part of the pharmacy offering for all Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota members who utilize Prime Therapeutics as their pharmacy benefit manager (PBM). Refer to the member's identification card to determine if Prime Therapeutics is the member's PBM; the RxPCN value is PGIGN.

Benefits

- **Eligibility and benefit coverage.** Prescribers can confirm member eligibility and prescription copay information before sending an e-prescription.
- **Improves patient safety and reduces time spent on phone calls with pharmacies.** Prescribers can check for harmful drug interactions by reviewing patient medication history at the point of care. There is less potential for error because there is no handwriting for the pharmacist to interpret.
- **Lower health care costs for everyone involved.** E-prescribing makes it easier for prescribers to select medications that are preferred by the patient's health plan, that meet therapeutic guidelines and are cost effective for the patient. Prescribers will know what medications require a prior authorization, step therapy authorization or have a quantity limitation applied to the medication allowing for the prescriber to either change the medication or submit an authorization request before the patient goes to the pharmacy.
- **Medication history awareness.** Enables quick access to patient's prescription drug history.
- **Drug recall notification.** Easily identifies patients to be notified in the event of a drug recall.

Preparing for e-prescribing

- Physicians interested in e-prescribing should use stand-alone e-prescribing software or an electronic medical record (EMR) that has been certified.
- Determine which services are important to you (prescription benefit, medication history, prescription routing). Then contact the vendors to compare their e-prescribing offerings.

Additional e-prescribing resources

There are helpful e-prescribing guides available to clinicians. Please click on the following links to learn more:

- American Medical Association (AMA) E-Prescribing Learning Center: ama-assn.org/ama/pub/eprescribing/home.shtml
- Surescripts E-Prescribing: surescripts.com/home.aspx