

NOTES FROM THE PHARMACIST PHARMACY UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT

Q3 2024 updates

Ensuring a higher quality of care and optimal, cost-effective outcomes through utilization management.

THE RIGHT DRUG AT THE RIGHT PRICE

Together, the pharmacists at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and our pharmacy benefit manager, Prime Therapeutics, regularly analyze drug trend data to shape utilization management (UM) programs. This update reflects changes in programs based on that analysis.¹

To get the most current program updates, visit the [Pharmacy Utilization Management web page](#).

Effective July 1st, 2024

New programs

UM program, therapy class, or drug descriptions are included below, along with the specific drugs targeted by these new UM programs. Please see the corresponding symbol for the type of UM program that applies.

PA

Prior Authorization

A process to ensure appropriate prescribing and use before a drug will be covered. Coverage may be approved after certain criteria are met.

QL

Quantity Limits

The maximum amount of drug allowed for each fill. Quantity limits are based on the number of days or number of units (pills, capsules, ounces, etc.). Quantity limits promote safe, cost-effective drug use reducing waste and overuse.

ST

Step Therapy



A process that requires trying another drug that may be more safe, clinically effective and, in some cases, less expensive, before a more expensive drug is approved.

Description	Target drug	Program type
Fabhalta – Used to treat a disease of the blood	Fabhalta	PA QL
Saxenda, Wegovy, Zepbound Coverage Exception and Formulary Exception – Drugs generally used for weight loss	Saxenda, Wegovy, Zepbound	QL
Weight Management – Drugs generally used for weight loss	Saxenda, Wegovy, Zepbound	PA QL

¹These UM programs apply generally to all Blue Cross and Blue Plus plans and products. Benefit plans vary in coverage and some plans may not implement these programs or provide coverage for certain medicines or services addressed in these programs.












Unless otherwise noted, prior authorization and quantity limit programs apply to both brand and generic drugs. Prime Therapeutics LLC is an independent company providing pharmacy benefit management services.

Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® of Minnesota and Blue Plus® are nonprofit independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.






Xphozah – Drug used to help return phosphate to normal levels	Xphozah	 
--	---------	---

Changes to existing UM programs

UM programs are updated on an ongoing basis to add new generics for targeted brand drugs or new drugs when they become available. The specific program additions are noted in the table below.





Description	Target drug	Program type
Agamree, Emflaza – Drugs used to treat an inherited neuromuscular disorder called Duchenne muscular dystrophy	Agamree	 
Biologic Immunomodulators – Drugs that are used to help regulate the body's immune system and are used in conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, and Crohn's disease	Simlandi, Zymfentra	 
Oral Tetracycline Derivatives – Antibiotics for specific types of infections	Tetracycline	
Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension – A condition in which there is high blood pressure in the lungs	Opsynvi, Sotatercept, Winrevair	 
Thrombopoietin Receptor Agonists and Tavalisse – Drugs used to treat low blood platelet counts	Alvaiz	 
Triptans – Drugs used in the treatment of migraine headaches	sumatriptan/ naproxen	 

Name changes to existing UM programs

Description	Target drug	Program type
Agamree, Emflaza <i>Note: Name changed from Emflaza</i>	Agamree, Emflaza	 
Anti-Obesity Non-GLP-1 Agents Formulary Exception <i>Note: Name changed from Anti-Obesity Formulary Exception</i>		
Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension <i>Note: Name changed from Oral Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension Effective 6/1/2024</i>	Opsynvi, Sotatercept, Winrevair	 

Effective August 1st, 2024

Discontinuation of UM programs

Description	Target drug	Program type
Jesduvroq (daprodustat) – A drug used to treat symptoms of low red blood cell counts caused by chronic kidney disease	Jesduvroq	 
Keveyis – A drug used for the treatment of a genetic condition which has periodic muscle paralysis	Keveyis	 

Effective September 1st, 2024

No program changes for September 1st, 2024 at this time.