



State of Maryland Step Therapy Protocol Exception Process

Members covered by a Maryland-fully-insured plan or a Maryland self-insured non-ERISA plan, may require treatment with a prescription drug is subject to certain utilization management (UM) criteria or rules to be reviewed prior to coverage. These rules may include Step Therapy requirements.

If medication on the formulary requires step-therapy, a health care provider may request an exception to the Step Therapy protocol by completing and submitting the applicable prior authorization (PA) form. The provider may contact the CVS Caremark® Prior Authorization Department for the appropriate PA form or the form can found at this link:

[Medical Exception/Prior Authorization/Precertification Requests for Prescription Medications](#)

As part of the authorization process, CVS Caremark will review the information submitted by the medical provider and determine if a request meets the requirements for exception based on the information below.

* Note that medical necessity requirements may still apply.

Consideration for Receiving a Step Therapy Protocol Exception

The requested medication may be covered when any of the below are met and documentation has been provided:

- The step therapy drug is contraindicated or will likely cause an adverse reaction to the insured;
- The step therapy drug is expected to be ineffective based on the known clinical characteristics of the insured and the known characteristics of the prescription drug regimen;
- The insured is stable on a prescription drug prescribed for the medical condition under consideration while covered under the policy of the insurer or under a previous source of coverage; or
- While covered under the policy of the insurer or a previous source of coverage, the insured has tried a prescription drug that:
 - is in the same pharmacologic class or has the same mechanism of action as the step therapy drug; and
 - was discontinued by the prescriber due to lack of efficacy or effectiveness, diminished effect, or an adverse event.

For insured Aetna Commercial plans, please use the link below to access the clinical review criteria for prescription drugs: <https://www.aetna.com/content/dam/aetna/pdfs/aetnacom/healthcare-professionals/documents-forms/precertification-request-for-prescription-drugs.pdf>

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