

Alternative Pain Therapies for Substance Use Disorder

Health plans are committed to ensuring Coloradans have affordable choices for alternative pain coverage so members can get the care they need, when they need it. We strongly support solutions to provide better care for patients with chronic pain and are actively pursuing strategies to reduce opioid misuse and to provide plan members access to alternative and appropriate pain therapies.



CAHP's Principles:

We believe in collaboration with providers and work closely together to cover the safest, most effective, and proven approaches to managing pain.

We are committed to limiting and reducing opioid addiction. Given the serious risks of addiction to opioids, insurance providers encourage physicians and patients to jointly develop pain treatment plans that start with non-opioid treatment options. Carriers offer a range of plans and services to meet the variety of health care needs for individuals.

Our members employ doctors, nurses, and other medical experts to evaluate scientific evidence to understand which tools, treatments, and technologies best improve patient health. Medical experts help plans develop evidence-based guidelines that are used in drug management and pain management programs.

HERE ARE THE FACTS:

- Insurance providers have instituted programs that are helping to reduce how much—and how often—opioids are prescribed.
- Insurance providers already pay for non-traditional interventions and work with providers and members to provide evidence-based benefits and tools to support pain management.
- Plans that provide coverage for an annual physical exam as preventive health care also include coverage and reimbursement for behavioral health screenings to identify potential substance use disorders.
- HB19-1269 eliminated prior authorization requirements and step therapy on any FDA approved medication on the carrier's formulary for medication assisted treatment. One covered medication for treatment must also be on the lower tier drug formulary of the carrier.

There are policy solutions to help decrease opioid misuse that won't increase costs to the health care system. These solutions include:

1. Leveraging the Colorado Prescription Drug Monitoring Program by allowing carriers to have access and support providers to monitor patients.
2. Supporting educational efforts for providers and consumers to manage pain.
3. Strengthening the workforce of providers to manage medication assisted treatment and behavioral counseling.