

**FAMILY SERVICES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS CIRCULAR**

**Date: March 24, 2010**

**CIRCULAR NUMBER: EIA#2010-15      Alternate Program(s):**

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**To:** Community Social Service Supervisors/Program Managers

**Subject: Drug Program Changes: OxyContin**

**Reference:** Section 22.1.1 – Health Services Program  
2007 – 06 Prescription Drug Program No Drugs Approved in Field

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**Type:**       Policy       Procedure       Rate       Information Only

Replaces # \_\_\_\_\_

**Effective Date: March 26, 2010**

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Effective March 26, 2010, the Department of Family Services and Consumer Affairs (Health Services Program) will implement a change in the benefit status for OxyContin (oxycondone) by moving this drug to the Exception Drug Status (EDS) Program. These changes are being made concurrently for all citizens in the province under the Pharmacare Program and are part of continued efforts to bring the FSCA formulary into line with the Pharmacare formulary.

As a result of this change physicians are now required to obtain the necessary approval from EDS, prior to the prescription being filled, in order for OxyContin to be covered.

Manitoba Health will be mailing an information sheet (attached) to EIA participants who are currently receiving OxyContin to advise them that they should talk to their physician about reviewing their prescription to get the required EDS approval. Participants currently receiving OxyContin will have until May 26, 2010 to obtain the necessary approval.

Field staff (at any authority level) must not approve OxyContin requests even if the participant has exhausted all other options including the EDS appeal process. If a participant requests reimbursement for OxyContin field staff must first call the DPIN Help Desk at 786-8000 press 3 (in Winnipeg) or 1-800-663-7774 press 3 (Rural) for authorization. If the request for benefit coverage is not approved, the participant has the option of personally paying for the total cost of the drug.

***Information for Patients***

***Changes to Employment & Income Assistance benefit coverage for the following drug:***

***OxyContin®***

***Effective March 26, 2010***

***If you are currently taking OxyContin® (oxycodone), this announcement is important for you.***

Oxycodone is a narcotic analgesic (opioid) available by prescription to control severe pain. OxyContin® is the brand name of the Purdue Pharma oxycodone.

Effective March 26, 2010, Employment & Income Assistance will implement a change in the benefit status for OxyContin® which will require approval from the Exception Drug Status (EDS) program at Manitoba Health at the time the prescription is written by your physician. All new patients starting therapy with OxyContin® are required to have EDS coverage in place to receive drug benefits. Your physician must contact the EDS program to obtain the necessary approval for benefit coverage before your prescription is filled.

**Patients who were receiving benefit coverage for Oxycontin prior to March 26, 2010.**

Patients who were receiving benefit coverage for OxyContin® prior to March 26, 2010, will continue to receive benefit coverage until **May 26, 2010**. Effective May 26, 2010, the Employment and Income Assistance Drug Plan will require Exception Drug Status approval be in place. Your doctor must contact the EDS program to obtain the necessary approval for benefit coverage before your prescription is filled.

If you qualify for EDS approval for OxyContin® your physician has prescribed, Employment & Income Assistance will reimburse 100% of the cost of the drug.

If the request for benefit coverage is not approved, you should discuss your medication needs with your physician and/or pharmacist. You also have the option of personally paying for the total cost of the drug.

This change will help to ensure benefit coverage for these drugs is only targeted to those patients who meet the established criteria recommended by an expert committee of physicians and pharmacists. In so doing, Employment & Income Assistance will provide benefit coverage which is similar to that provided by most other provincial and territorial drug plans.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please call Provincial Drug Programs at Manitoba Health at 786-7141 if you live in Winnipeg or at 1-800-297-8099 if you live outside Winnipeg TTY (204) 774-8618.