



# Inappropriate Treatment Delays and Denials for HIV PrEP and PEP

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The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has recently learned of inappropriate treatment delays and denials for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) used to prevent seroconversion to HIV. These incidents have negatively impacted beneficiary health.

In most of the investigated cases, the cause for delay/denial of a service was a lack of information/understanding related to the scope of benefits and/or claims processes involved with billing for the service. DHCS also received reports that some providers shared information with beneficiaries that was misleading, incorrect, or false regarding when prior authorization (PA) is/is not required for HIV medications. DHCS wishes to clarify/remind providers that **HIV medications for both PrEP and PEP are a Medi-Cal benefit when deemed medically necessary.**

It is the responsibility of pharmacy providers, medical providers, and ancillary staff to be fully informed about the scope of benefits and the proper submission of claims for HIV prevention and treatment medications.

**These medications do not require a PA when used as a preventative regimen for persons at risk of acquiring HIV PrEP or for PEP treatment.** DHCS wants to ensure timely access to these critical medications.

Although there may be a Code 1 (diagnosis code) restriction for HIV medications, pharmacists are encouraged to override using Submission Clarification Code 7 within the scope of their professional discretion, and/or consider suspected exposure to HIV as an HIV diagnosis for the purposes of claims submission. Diagnosis codes indicating potential exposure to the HIV virus are sufficient documentation of diagnoses meeting the Code 1 requirements. Examples would include diagnosis codes related to sticks from sharp objects that may be contaminated with

HIV, encounters with body fluids from a person that may have the HIV virus, or potential transmission through unprotected sexual encounters.

For claims or PA assistance, you can call the Medi-Cal Rx Customer Service Center (CSC) at 1-800-977-2273, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

You can also submit questions via email to Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach at [MediCalRxEducationOutreach@magellanhealth.com](mailto:MediCalRxEducationOutreach@magellanhealth.com)