San Bernardino County
Department of Behavioral Health

Prescription Policy

Effective Date	06/09/2014
Revised Date	03/30/2016 CaSonya Thomas, Director

Policy

It is the policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) for staff to adhere to guidelines regarding the issuing, processing, and storing of prescriptions.

Purpose

To ensure prescriptions are written by authorized DBH providers and financial responsibility has been determined by Financial Interviewer.

Department Pay

DBH will pay for prescriptions if the following criteria apply:

- Prescription is issued by a DBH provider authorized by the DBH Medical Director.
- Prescription is for a designated DBH client.
- Medication prescribed is on the "DBH Approved Drug Formulary" or has a prior authorization.

Client Pay

DBH shall not pay for prescriptions when the following criteria apply:

- Alternate payer is identified for the client.
- Client has Medi-Cal and the medication is covered by Medi-Cal Formulary.
- Determination by a DBH Financial Interviewer that client is financially able to pay for his/her own medication, unless client is confined in a locked contract facility.

Pharmaceutical Company Pay

If it is determined by a DBH provider the client is financially unable to pay for his/her own medication, the provider may request the registered nurse (RN), licensed vocational nurse (LVN), psychiatric technician (PT), clinic assistant (CA), clerical staff or case manager assist client in applying for the Patient Assistance Program (PAP). The DBH provider will sign and complete necessary portions of the Pharmaceutical company PAP application. The PAP is free to the client.

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Prescription Policy, Continued

DBH Tiered Drug Formulary System

The DBH Medical Director is responsible for maintaining, updating, and distributing the formulary to authorized providers, clinics, contract pharmacies, and DBH Administrative Services staff. The formulary shall be revised as often as is deemed necessary by the DBH Medical Director.

DBH providers shall prescribe formulary medications whenever possible based on the following tiered system:

Tier I • Medications found on the formulary can be prescribed without prior authorization of Clinic or DBH Medical Director.
Tier II • Medications are not on the formulary and shall need prior authorization by the DBH Medical Director. Documentation of failed Tier I medication shall be written in client's chart before a client can be prescribed a Tier II medication. Once the client is approved for Tier II medication, staff shall review for possible eligibility for PAP.

Patient Assistance Program

The PAP provides payment assistance for certain behavioral health-related prescription medication(s) to clients who have met program eligibility requirements. If client is prescribed a non-formulary medication and is not receiving Medi-Cal or other insurance, DBH provider may recommend the client apply for PAP.

Note: Clients may or may not qualify for PAP depending on the specific requirements of each Pharmaceutical company program.

Related Policy or Procedure

DBH Standard Practice Manual:

- MDS2007: Benzodiazepine Medication Policy
- MDS2008: Control/Access to Medication and Medical Supplies
- MDS2012: Sample Injectable Medications Policy
- MDS2022: Patient Assistance Program Policy