



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER: 22-0930

HEALTH INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION POLICY FOR LIFE PLAN POLICYHOLDERS: MEDICATION MANAGEMENT DURING AND AFTER HURRICANE FIONA

This Administrative Order repeals Administrative Orders 22-0915, 22-0915-A, 22-0916 and 22-0916-A.

As a result of the state of emergency that Puerto Rico is experiencing after the passage of Hurricane Fiona, the Health Insurance Administration (ASES) establishes the policy detailed below to guarantee continued access to medications for the Vital Plan population.

The following edits and instructions are extended **to all municipalities in Puerto Rico**, while the emergency declaration remains in effect.

- A. The ***"Refill Too Soon"*** edit is released, meaning the refill of a medication is authorized without having to comply with the waiting time, allowing the dispensing of up to 30 days of supply.
- B. ***Prior Authorization (PA)*** requirements with the insurer for the dispensing of drugs available in the Plan Vital Covered Drug Formulary are suspended.
- C. The following requirements for drugs available in the Plan Vital Covered Drug Formulary are also suspended:
 - a) ***Step Therapy (ST)***.
 - b) ***Quantity Limits (QL) to be dispensed***.
 - c) ***Age Limits (AL)***.
 - d) ***Medical specialty or primary care physician counter-signature requirements***.
- D. Other edits, such as ***Cost Exceeds Maximum, Product/Service Not Covered*** and ***Product Not on Formulary***, among others, remain in effect.
- E. Necessary controls will be administered for the Therapeutic Duplication edit to prevent multiple dispenses in different pharmacies.
- F. Acute medication dispensing is authorized for up to a 30-day supply in accordance with Act No. 274-2018, as amended. If Code 7W is received, you must process that one acute medication refill as if it were a new prescription and document "Fiona Emergency" on the

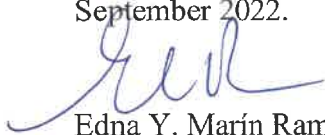
back of the prescription. A copy of the properly documented prescription should be filed with the other regular prescriptions as usual.

- G. For Plan Vital beneficiaries who need a refill of maintenance drugs and do not have the prescription or have no refills available, it will be sufficient to bring the empty vials to the pharmacy where the medication was purchased for a one-time emergency fill.
- i. If the patient's pharmacy is not offering services, they may take the empty vials to any other pharmacy within the Plan Vital network in Puerto Rico and those pharmacies can offer the patient emergency dispensing. Currently, there are more than 800 pharmacies offering services.
 - ii. In the case of patients who have lost their medication vials, they can visit the pharmacy that regularly provides services to them, and who has their record, for a 30-day refill. If the patient goes to a pharmacy within the Plan Vital network that does not have their record, the patient may contact the Abarca Call Center at 1-866-993-7422 for assistance.
- H. For those pharmacies in the Plan Vital network that are offering services, but do not have internet service or have intermittent service, they are encouraged to dispense the medication to the patient. They will have the opportunity to bill electronically for those medications as soon as service is restored.
- I. **None of the above provisions apply to controlled substances. Controlled substances shall be governed by the current dispensing process.**
- J. **Non-formulary drugs maintain the requirement of pre-authorization with the insurer.**

Pharmacies contracted to serve the Plan Vital population are NOT permitted to require beneficiaries to pay for the cost of their medications under Vital coverage. They may only charge the beneficiary the co-payment established in the beneficiary's Plan Vital membership card in those cases where it applies. Pharmacies that do not comply with this guideline may be removed from the Plan Vital pharmacy network.

This policy shall be effective as of its publication and for the duration of the emergency declaration issued by the Governor of Puerto Rico as a consequence of Hurricane Fiona, or until ASES suspends the same; whichever occurs first.

AND FOR THE RECORD, I have signed this Order in San Juan, Puerto Rico, this 30th day of September 2022.



Edna Y. Marín Ramos, MA
Executive Director