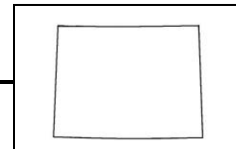


Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

Colorado

Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 66,100¹



Grade	Summary
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #8B4513;">A-</p>	<p>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions: Effective January 1, 2018, the Fee-For-Service (FFS) and Primary Care Case Management System (PCCM) have no minimum liver damage requirement for accessing treatment. The Managed Care Organization (MCO), Denver Health Medicaid Choice, does not have any liver damage requirements.</p> <p>Sobriety Restrictions: FFS and PCCM require screening and counseling for sobriety; for members abusing/misusing alcohol or controlled substances, members must be receiving or be enrolled in counseling or a substance use treatment program for at least 1 month prior to starting treatment. The MCO (Denver Health Medicaid Choice) also requires screening and counseling for alcohol and substance use.</p> <p>Prescriber Restrictions: FFS and PCCM require a prescription to be written by or in consultation with a specialist. The MCO (Denver Health Medicaid Choice) also requires a prescription to be written by or in consultation with a specialist.</p> <p>Recommendations to Improve Patient Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove mandatory counseling or substance use treatment requirement to start treatment or allow simultaneous treatments. • Remove prescriber requirements. • Maintain transparency regarding hepatitis C coverage criteria and ensure coverage parity between FFS and MCO programs. <p><i>Grade Rationale: Colorado provides extensive access to hepatitis C treatment. However, Colorado still imposes provider restrictions, and the mandatory one-month treatment or counseling requirement for individuals abusing/misusing substances moderately restricts access. In recognition that FFS, PCCM, and MCOs have eliminated minimum liver damage requirements, an A minus grade is issued.</i></p>

Background

As of November 2017, Colorado had 1,352,546 individuals enrolled in Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).² Colorado’s Medicaid program is called Health First Colorado. The state operates a Fee-For-Service (FFS) program called Health First Colorado Basic. Medicaid contracts with one Managed Care Organization (MCO), Denver Health Medicaid Choice, and operates a Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) program known as the Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC).³ The ACC program is divided into seven geographic Regional Care Collaborative Organizations (RCCO).⁴ Denver Health Medicaid Choice covers Medicaid-eligible individuals who live in a limited geographic area including Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, and Jefferson Counties.⁵ Over 77 percent of beneficiaries are enrolled in the ACC program, over 14 percent in FFS, and eight percent in the MCO plan.⁶ Hepatitis C coverage criteria set by the state’s Medicaid program affect most beneficiaries and applies to both the FFS/PCCM and MCO programs.

State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

In early 2016, Colorado’s FFS program required patients to have severe liver damage (F3 or greater) and six months of sobriety from alcohol or substances to access treatment.⁷ Additionally, a patient with a history of use had to submit toxicology screens throughout treatment.⁸ In December 2016, Colorado changed its hepatitis C coverage criteria allowing individuals with at least moderate liver damage (F2 or greater) to qualify for treatment and reduced the sobriety restrictions.⁹

A legal challenge was started against Colorado’s liver damage requirement in September 2016.¹⁰ Attorneys for the ACLU of Colorado and the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of Colorado Medicaid beneficiaries being denied treatment due to the state’s requirement that they demonstrate at least moderate liver damage (F2 or greater) under the theory that Colorado is not complying with federal law that requires state Medicaid programs to pay for medically necessary treatment.¹¹ The victory of this case led to the state eliminating liver damage requirement.¹²

FFS requires a patient to be screened for current alcohol or substance use. If a patient is currently using substances, then the individual must be participating or enrolled in a counseling or substance use treatment program for at least one month prior to treatment.¹³ A

prescription must be written by or in consultation with a specialist.¹⁴ Denver Health Medicaid Choice imposes the same sobriety and very similar prescribing requirements.¹⁵ The MCO does not impose liver damage requirements.¹⁶

FFS details other requirements. A beneficiary must have received the full course of hepatitis A and B vaccinations and be 18 years old.¹⁷ The prescriber must attest to a patient's readiness for treatment and use a reputable assessment tool to evaluate the individual's readiness such as the Preparation for Hepatitis C Treatment (PREP-C).¹⁸ The PA requests documentation if a patient has been diagnosed with co-morbid conditions such as HIV/AIDS but does not indicate if a positive diagnosis plays a role in approval for treatment.¹⁹ Authorization for treatment is provided initially for eight weeks and continuation of treatment relies on the submission of HCV RNA levels at four, 12 and 24 weeks.²⁰ If HCV RNA is detectable (>25 copies) at week four while the patient is undergoing treatment, HCV RNA will be reassessed in two weeks. If the repeated HCV RNA level has not decreased (i.e., >1 log₁₀ IU/ml from nadir), treatment will be discontinued unless documentation is provided that supports continuation of therapy.²¹ Denver Health Medicaid Choice, imposes the same restrictions related to eight weeks' initial authorization and follow up HCV RNA testing.²² The FFS program only covers treatment once in a patient's lifetime.²³

The FFS Preferred Drug List (PDL) includes the following Direct-Acting Antivirals (DAAs): preferred (Mavyret and Epclusa) and non-preferred (Daklinza, Harvoni, Olysio, Sovaldi, Technivie, Viekira PAK/XR, Vosevi, Zepatier).²⁴ Denver Health Medicaid Choice lists the following DAAs as preferred agents: Epclusa (Genotypes 1-6), Harvoni (Genotypes 1,4, 5 and 6) and Zepatier (Genotypes 1 and 4).²⁵ Unlike FFS, Denver Health also requires a confirmation that the prescriber and patient understand that patients who terminated previous hepatitis C treatment with a DAA medication due to nonmedical reasons will not be considered for retreatment.²⁶ Additionally, Denver Health requests confirmation that the patient does not have a life expectancy of less than 12 months due to non-liver related comorbid conditions.²⁷ Finally, the MCO requires confirmation that patient is willing to adhere to treatment requirements.²⁸

Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

Colorado's FFS program has no minimum liver damage requirement.²⁹

Denver Health Medicaid Choice does not impose liver damage requirements.³⁰ The MCO's PA does not stipulate any liver damage criteria; however, it does request if the patient has confirmation of "either no evidence of cirrhosis or compensated cirrhosis."³¹

Sobriety Restrictions

Colorado's FFS program requires a patient to be screened for current alcohol or substance use. If a patient is currently using substances, then the individual must be participating or enrolled in a counseling or substance use treatment program for at least one month prior to treatment.³²

Denver Health Medicaid Choice's sobriety requirements match the FFS criteria.³³ However, the MCO does state that treatment will not be approved if a patient has a "concurrent psychiatric illness and does not have strong primary care physician and psychiatric support."³⁴

Prescriber Restrictions

Colorado's FFS program requires a prescription written by or in consultation with a specialist (infectious disease, gastroenterologist, or hepatologist).³⁵

Denver Health Medicaid Choice requires a prescription to be written by or in consultation with a gastroenterologist, infectious disease, hepatologist or HIV specialist.³⁶

Points of Contact for Questions & Concerns about Colorado's State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Access

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¹ HepVu, Colorado State Profile: <https://hepvu.org/state/colorado/>

² Medicaid & CHIP in Colorado, By-State, Medicaid (Accessed February 2018): <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/by-state/stateprofile.html?state=colorado>

³ Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) Health Plan Options (Accessed May 2017) <https://www.healthfirstcolorado.com/health-plan-choices/>

⁴ Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC), Colorado Department of Health Policy & Financing (Accessed May 2017): <https://www.colorado.gov/hcpf/accountable-care-collaborative>; See also RCCO Contact Information: https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Regional%20Care%20Collaborative%20Organization%20Customer%20Contacts_1.pdf; *RCCOs by Region Map*, Rocky Mountain Health Plans: <http://live-rocky.pantheon.site.io/sites/default/files/resource/RCCOs%20By%20Region.png>

⁵ My Medicaid Choice, Health First Colorado: <http://www.denverhealthmedicaid.org/about> (Accessed June 2017).

⁶ Share of Medicaid Population Covered Under Different Delivery Systems, Medicaid Managed Care State Level Data, Medicaid Managed Care Market Tracker, State Health Facts, The Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation (Accessed June 2017): <http://kf.org/medicaid/state-indicator/share-of-medicaid-population-covered-under-different-delivery-systems/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colld%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

⁷ Colorado Hepatitis C Prior Authorization Request Form, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Version: March 1, 2016): No longer available.

⁸ Colorado Hepatitis C Prior Authorization Request Form, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Version: March 1, 2016): No longer available.

- ⁹ Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 1/1/2018): <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Preferred%20Drug%20List%20-%20effective%20January%201%2C%202018%20v5.pdf>
- ¹⁰ Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, Harvard Law School, *ACLU and CHLPI File Suit Against Colorado Medicaid for HCV Restrictions* (December 2017): <https://www.chlpi.org/acu-and-chlpi-file-suit-against-colorado-medicaid-for-hcv-restrictions/>.
- ¹¹ Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, Harvard Law School, *ACLU and CHLPI File Suit Against Colorado Medicaid for HCV Restrictions* (December 2017): <https://www.chlpi.org/acu-and-chlpi-file-suit-against-colorado-medicaid-for-hcv-restrictions/>.
- ¹² Colorado Medicaid to Lift Restrictions on Hepatitis C Treatment in 2018, HEP (2017), <https://www.hepmag.com/article/colorado-medicaid-lift-restrictions-hepatitis-c-treatment-2018>.
- ¹³ Colorado Hepatitis C Prior Authorization Request Form, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Version: 12/01/17): <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Hepatitis%20C%20PAR%202018%20January.pdf>
- ¹⁴ Ibid. Colorado Hepatitis C Prior Authorization Request Form, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Version: 12/01/17)
- ¹⁵ Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018): https://www.denverhealthmedicaid.org/sites/denverhealthmedicaid.com/files/attachments/Medicaid.CHP%20Prior%20Authorization%20Criteria_1Q2018.pdf
- ¹⁶ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ¹⁷ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ¹⁸ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ¹⁹ Ibid. Colorado Hepatitis C Prior Authorization Request Form, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Version: 12/01/17)
- ²⁰ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²¹ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²² Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²³ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²⁴ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²⁵ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²⁶ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²⁷ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²⁸ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ²⁹ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³⁰ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³¹ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³² Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³³ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³⁴ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³⁵ Ibid. Preferred Drug List, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³⁶ Ibid. Prior Authorization Approval Criteria, Denver Health Medicaid Choice (Effective: 01/01/2018)
- ³⁷ Department of Health Care and Financing, Sue Birch: <https://www.colorado.gov/governor/sue-birch>
- ³⁸ Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee (P&T), Colorado Department of Health Care and Financing (Accessed June 2017): <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/pharmacy-and-therapeutics-committee>