

Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

Georgia

Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 84,500¹



Grade	Summary
C	<p>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions: Fee-For-Service (FFS) does not have any liver damage requirements. One Managed Care Organization (MCO), Amerigroup Community Care, also does not have any liver damage requirements. One MCO (WellCare of Georgia) appears to require severe liver damage (F3 or greater). Two MCOs (Peach State Health Plan and CareSource) do not have publicly available information.</p> <p>Sobriety Restrictions: FFS requires a patient to enroll in a substance use program if the individual is currently using alcohol or intravenous drugs. One MCO (Amerigroup Community Care) has the same requirement. One MCO (WellCare of Georgia) considers patients with active substance or alcohol use on a case-by-case basis and in coordination with a substance treatment specialist. Two MCOs (Peach State Health Plan and CareSource) do not have publicly available information.</p> <p>Prescriber Restrictions: FFS does not have any prescriber restrictions. One MCO (Amerigroup Community Care) also does not have any prescriber restrictions. One MCO (WellCare of Georgia) appears to require a prescription be written by or in consultation with a specialist. Two MCOs (Peach State Health Plan and CareSource) do not have publicly available information.</p> <p>Recommendations to Improve Patient Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate liver damage, sobriety and prescriber restrictions. • Ensure parity across FFS and MCOs and transparency regarding hepatitis C coverage criteria. <p><i>Grade Rationale: While Georgia FFS and one MCO do not have liver damage requirements, at least one MCO appears to require severe liver damage (F3 or greater). FFS and at least one MCO require a patient to enroll in a substance use program to access treatment. In addition, two MCOs do not have publicly available information. Georgia could improve its grade with minimal changes.</i></p>

Background

As of March 2017, there were 1,736,905² individuals enrolled in Georgia’s Medicaid program, known as Georgia Families. This program provides health care services to Medicaid enrollees and PeachCare (for kids) in partnership with the Georgia Department of Community Health and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs).³ Beginning July 1, 2017, four MCOs are available including: AmeriGroup Community Care (Amerigroup), WellCare of Georgia (WellCare), CareSource and the Peach State Health Plan (owned by Centene Corporation).⁴ Over 70 percent of Medicaid beneficiaries are enrolled in MCOs; the remaining 30 percent are enrolled in the Fee-For-Service (FFS) program.⁵

State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

There has been some political and public discussion on the hepatitis C epidemic in Georgia, particularly in the state legislature. In 2015, State Senator Dean Burke, a physician, organized a panel of health experts from public and private sectors to highlight the challenges and opportunities of addressing the disease. All panelists “agreed tackling the virus now, despite the costs, will save the state untold millions of dollars in the long run.”⁶ Additionally, there have been hearings in the General Assembly on the epidemic.⁷ The state responded to the NVHR/CHLPI survey on hepatitis C coverage requirements.

Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

FFS program requires a patient to be diagnosed with “chronic hepatitis C virus infection.”⁸ There are no specified liver damage requirements.

Amerigroup requires patients to be diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C and baseline quantitative hepatitis C RNA test.⁹ Amerigroup also does not have specified liver damage requirement.

According to the latest publicly available information (clinical guidelines, updated May 2015), it appears that WellCare requires severe liver damage (F3 or greater) to qualify for treatment.¹⁰ WellCare also does not appear to have updated its prior authorization (PA) form since January, 2016¹¹ which inquires if the patient has been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C and the fibrosis score.

Peach State Health Plan's liver damage criteria are unknown. Peach State Health Plan's website provides a general specialty PA form that does not include hepatitis C specific information.¹²

CareSource does not have publicly available information.¹³

Sobriety Restrictions

The FFS program requires a patient to enroll in a substance use program if the patient is a current user of alcohol or intravenous drugs.¹⁴

Amerigroup requires a patient to be enrolled in substance use program if the individual is currently using.¹⁵ If the patient is not actively engaged in substance use treatment, Amerigroup also requests the prescriber indicate whether an adherence assessment has been done to assure successful treatment completion.¹⁶

WellCare's PA form states patients with active substance or alcohol use will be considered for treatment on a case-by-case basis and treatment should be coordinated with a substance treatment specialist.¹⁷ Additionally, WellCare's PA form requests urine toxicology results within the last thirty days.¹⁸

Peach State Health Plan sobriety criteria are unknown.¹⁹ Peach State Health Plan's website provides a general specialty medicine PA form that does not include hepatitis C specific information.²⁰

CareSource does not have publicly available information.²¹

Prescriber Restrictions

FFS PA form does not specify any prescriber restrictions.²²

Amerigroup does not indicate any prescriber requirements on its PA form.²³

WellCare's prescribing requirements are unclear. The PA form does not request specific prescribers.²⁴ However, the clinical guidelines state a prescription must be written by or in consultation with a hepatologist, gastroenterologist, or infectious disease specialist.²⁵

Peach State Health Plan's prescriber criteria are unknown. Peach State Health Plan's website provides a general specialty medicine PA form that does not include hepatitis C specific information.²⁶

CareSource does not yet have publicly available information.²⁷

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

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¹ HepVu, Georgia State Profile: <https://hepvu.org/state/georgia/>

² Medicaid & CHIP in Georgia; By-State, Medicaid.gov (Accessed May 2017): <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/by-state/stateprofile.html?state=georgia>

³ <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/program-information/medicaid-and-chip-enrollment-data/medicaid-enrollment-data-collected-through-mbes.html> (accessed August 2016)

⁴ Georgia Department of Community Health, Georgia Families <https://dch.georgia.gov/georgia-families> (Accessed April 2017)

⁵ Georgia Department of Community Health, Care Management Organizations: <http://dch.georgia.gov/care-management-organizations-cmo> (Accessed April 2017)

⁶ Share of Medicaid Population Covered under Different Delivery Systems, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

⁷ <http://kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/share-of-medicaid-population-covered-under-different-delivery-systems/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

⁸ Jim Burrell, *Eradicating Hepatitis C in Georgia an Expensive, Essential Goal*, 90.1 WABE RADIO, Aug. 12, 2015, <http://news.wabe.org/post/eradicating-hepatitis-c-georgia-expensive-essential-goal> (Accessed April 2017)

⁹ Jim Burrell, *Eradicating Hepatitis C in Georgia an Expensive, Essential Goal*, 90.1 WABE RADIO, Aug. 12, 2015, <http://news.wabe.org/post/eradicating-hepatitis-c-georgia-expensive-essential-goal> (Accessed April 2017)

¹⁰ Georgia Dept. of Community Health, *Georgia Medicaid Fee-for-Service Hepatitis C Agents PA Summary*: https://dch.georgia.gov/sites/dch.georgia.gov/files/Hepatitis_C_Agents_0.pdf (Updated 10/01/16)

¹¹ Amerigroup, Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs) for Hepatitis C: https://providers.amerigroup.com/ProviderDocuments/GAGA_CAID_DAAforHepC.pdf (Updated 03/01/17)

¹² WellCare Health Plans, Hepatitis C Treatment (Last Updated 05/2015): https://www.wellcare.com/~media/PDFs/CCG/CCG/NA_All_CCG_Hepatitis_C_eng_05_2015_v3.ashx

¹³ WellCare Health Plans, Prior Authorization Request Form for Hepatitis C Treatment, <https://www.wellcare.com/Georgia/Providers/Medicaid/Forms> (under Pharmacy Services; Hepatitis C Treatment Prior Authorization Request Form). (Last updated 01/12/2016)

¹⁴ Peach State Health Plan, Pharmacy Forms, Authorization Forms: <http://www.pshpgeorgia.com/for-providers/pharmacy/pharmacy-forms/>

¹⁵ CareSource, Forms, Pharmacy Prior Authorization: <https://www.caresource.com/providers/georgia/medicaid/plan-resources/forms/>

¹⁶ See Georgia Dept. of Community Health, *Georgia Medicaid Fee-for-Service Hepatitis C Agents PA Summary*: https://dch.georgia.gov/sites/dch.georgia.gov/files/Hepatitis_C_Agents_0.pdf (Updated 10/01/16)

¹⁷ Amerigroup, Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs) for Hepatitis C: https://providers.amerigroup.com/ProviderDocuments/GAGA_CAID_DAAforHepC.pdf (Updated 03/01/17)

¹⁸ Amerigroup RealSolutions, Hepatitis C Therapy Prior Authorization Form: https://providers.amerigroup.com/ProviderDocuments/MDMD_HepCProviderPAForm.pdf (Updated 02/17)

¹⁹ WellCare Health Plans, Prior Authorization Request Form for Hepatitis C Treatment, <https://www.wellcare.com/Georgia/Providers/Medicaid/Forms> (under Pharmacy Services; Hepatitis C Treatment Prior Authorization Request Form). (Last updated 01/12/2016)

²⁰ WellCare Health Plans, Prior Authorization Request Form for Hepatitis C Treatment, <https://www.wellcare.com/Georgia/Providers/Medicaid/Forms> (under Pharmacy Services; Hepatitis C Treatment Prior Authorization Request Form). (Last updated 01/12/2016)

²¹ Comprehensive Preferred Drug List, Peach State Health Plan (Updated 03/2017): https://pharmacy.envolvehealth.com/content/dam/centene/envolve-pharmacy-solutions/pdfs/PDL/FORMULARY-PEACH_STATE_HEALTH_PLAN.pdf

²² Peach State Health Plan, Pharmacy Forms, Authorization Forms: <http://www.pshpgeorgia.com/for-providers/pharmacy/pharmacy-forms/>

²³ CareSource, Forms, Pharmacy Prior Authorization: <https://www.caresource.com/providers/georgia/medicaid/plan-resources/forms/>

²⁴ Georgia Dept. of Community Health, *Georgia Medicaid Fee-for-Service Hepatitis C Agents PA Summary*: https://dch.georgia.gov/sites/dch.georgia.gov/files/Hepatitis_C_Agents_0.pdf (Updated 10/01/16)

²⁵ Amerigroup RealSolutions, Hepatitis C Therapy Prior Authorization Form: https://providers.amerigroup.com/ProviderDocuments/MDMD_HepCProviderPAForm.pdf (Updated 02/17)

²⁶ WellCare Health Plans, Prior Authorization Request Form for Hepatitis C Treatment, <https://www.wellcare.com/Georgia/Providers/Medicaid/Forms> (under Pharmacy Services; Hepatitis C Treatment Prior Authorization Request Form). (Last updated 01/12/2016)

²⁷ WellCare Health Plans, Hepatitis C Treatment (Last Updated 05/2015): https://www.wellcare.com/~media/PDFs/CCG/CCG/NA_All_CCG_Hepatitis_C_eng_05_2015_v3.ashx

²⁸ Peach State Health Plan, Pharmacy Forms, Authorization Forms: <http://www.pshpgeorgia.com/for-providers/pharmacy/pharmacy-forms/>

²⁹ CareSource, Forms, Pharmacy Prior Authorization: <https://www.caresource.com/providers/georgia/medicaid/plan-resources/forms/>