

# Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

## Iowa

Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 12,600<sup>1</sup>



Grade	Summary
C	<p><b>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions:</b> Iowa does not impose liver damage restrictions.</p> <p><b>Sobriety Restrictions:</b> FFS and all MCOs require at least three months' sobriety from alcohol and substance use, documented by a urine screen.</p> <p><b>Prescriber Restrictions:</b> FFS and all MCOs require a liver, infectious disease or digestive disease specialist to prescribe or consult.</p> <p><b>Recommendations to Improve Patient Access:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove sobriety and prescriber restrictions.</li> <li>Maintain transparency regarding hepatitis C coverage requirements and parity across FFS and MCO programs.</li> </ul> <p><i>Grade Rationale: Despite removing liver damage restrictions, Iowa continues to have severe sobriety and prescriber restrictions. With these in place, very few people with hepatitis C have access to treatment.</i></p>

### Background

As of June 2021, Iowa had 778,561 individuals enrolled in Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program.<sup>2</sup> Iowa operates a Fee-For-Service (FFS) program and contracts with Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), through a program known as IA Health Link.<sup>3</sup> Ninety-five percent of beneficiaries are enrolled in two MCOs, Amerigroup Iowa and Iowa Total Care.<sup>4</sup> The remaining five percent participate in FFS.<sup>5</sup>

### State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

In July 2020, Iowa took the significant step of removing their previous liver damage restrictions (F2 or greater) to allow any individual with chronic hepatitis C to receive treatment.<sup>6</sup> This change applies to both FFS as well as both MCO plans. Despite having no liver damage restrictions, the prior authorization criteria specify that an individual must have "abstained from the use of illicit drugs and alcohol for a minimum of three (3) months as evidenced by a negative urine confirmation test. . ." <sup>7</sup> Iowa requires a diagnosis of chronic hepatitis C documented by HCV RNA within 12 months of starting treatment and HCV genotype. A digestive, liver or infectious disease specialist must prescribe or consult.<sup>8</sup> The prior authorization (PA) form requests if the beneficiary has a history of non-compliance. If yes, the prescriber must submit chart notes documenting steps taken to address non-compliance.<sup>9</sup> FFS requires if the patient is a woman of child-bearing age (or a male partner thereof) that she use two kinds of birth control and have pregnancy tests every month during treatment and at least six months after.<sup>10</sup> Lost or stolen medication replacement requests will not be authorized, and only one treatment attempt is authorized per calendar year.<sup>11</sup> The FFS preferred drug list includes the following Direct-Acting Antivirals (DAAs): preferred (Mavyret, generic Epclusa) and non-preferred (Daklinza, Epclusa, Harvoni, Sovaldi, Vosevi, and Zepatier).<sup>12</sup>

Both MCOs either explicitly state that they follow the state's preferred drug list and prior authorization criteria, or otherwise link directly to the state's criteria on their public-facing websites directed towards providers.<sup>13</sup>

### Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

Iowa FFS and both MCOs do not impose liver damage restrictions.<sup>14</sup>

### Sobriety Restrictions

Iowa FFS and both MCOs require at least three months' sobriety from alcohol and substance use as documented by a negative urine test. Additionally, a prescriber must provide counseling regarding alcohol and substance use and education to prevent transmission.<sup>15</sup>

### Prescriber Restrictions

Iowa FFS and both MCOs require a liver, infectious disease or digestive disease specialist to prescribe or consult.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Iowa State Profile, HepVu: <https://hepvu.org/state/iowa/>.

<sup>2</sup> Medicaid and CHIP in Iowa, By State, Medicaid.org (Accessed December 2021): <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/by-state/stateprofile.html?state=iowa>.

<sup>3</sup> Member Services, Iowa Department of Human Services (Accessed December 2021): <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members>.

<sup>4</sup> Choosing a Health Plan, Iowa Department of Human Services (Accessed December 2021): <https://dhs.iowa.gov/iahealthlink/choosing-a-health-plan>.

<sup>5</sup> Share of Medicaid Population Covered under Different Delivery Systems, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Medicaid Managed Care Market Tracker (Accessed December 2021): <http://www.kff.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>.

<sup>6</sup> Informational Letter No. 2130-MC-FFC, Iowa Department of Human Services (June 1, 2020): <http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/sites/default/files/ghs-files/informational-letters/2020-06-02/2140-mc-ffsjuly2020iowamedicaidpharmacyprogramchanges.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services, Effective January 1, 2022 (Accessed December 2021) <http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/sites/default/files/ghs-files/prior-authorization-forms/2021-11-19/hepatitis-c-treatments-pa-form-jan-22.pdf>; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services, Effective January 1, 2022 (Accessed December 2021): [http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/pa\\_criteria](http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/pa_criteria).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>12</sup> Preferred Drug List (PDL), Iowa Medicaid Program, Department of Human Services: [http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/preferred\\_drug\\_lists](http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/preferred_drug_lists).

<sup>13</sup> Pharmacy, Iowa Total Care: <https://www.iowatotalcare.com/providers/pharmacy.html>; See also Request for Prior Authorization – Hepatitis C Treatments, Updated June 2021 (Accessed December 2021)

[https://www.iowatotalcare.com/content/dam/centene/iowa-total-care/PDF/prior-auth/hepatitis-c-treatments\\_6-21.pdf](https://www.iowatotalcare.com/content/dam/centene/iowa-total-care/PDF/prior-auth/hepatitis-c-treatments_6-21.pdf); See also Pharmacy: Hep C Form, Amerigroup, Updated May 2021 (Accessed December 2021):

<https://provider.amerigroup.com/iowa-provider/resources/forms>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Hepatitis C Treatments, Request for Prior Authorization, Iowa Department of Human Services; See also Iowa Medicaid Drug Prior Authorization Criteria, Iowa Department of Human Services.

<sup>17</sup> Top Administrators, Iowa Department of Human Services: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/about/top-administrators>.

<sup>18</sup> Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee, Iowa Medicaid PDL, Iowa Department of Human Services: [http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/pt\\_committee\\_info](http://www.iowamedicaidpdl.com/pt_committee_info).