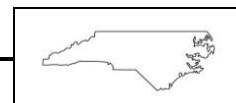


Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

North Carolina



Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 66,400¹

Grade	Summary
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">A</p>	<p>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions: North Carolina does not impose any liver damage restrictions.</p> <p>Sobriety Restrictions: North Carolina does not impose any apparent sobriety restrictions.</p> <p>Prescriber Restrictions: North Carolina does not impose prescriber requirements.</p> <p>Recommendations to Improve Patient Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove prior authorization requirement. • Maintain parity between FFS and MCOs and transparency regarding coverage criteria. <p><i>Grade Rationale: North Carolina has made significant progress in expanding access to hepatitis C treatment, and now imposes no restrictions based on liver damage, sobriety, or prescriber. North Carolina also appears to have achieved parity between FFS and MCOs. However, North Carolina still requires prior authorization. By removing prior authorization, North Carolina could improve its grade to an A+.</i></p>

Overview

As of May 2021, North Carolina had 2,072,202 individuals enrolled in Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).² North Carolina operates three different Medicaid programs. Sixty-nine percent of beneficiaries receive care from a managed care organization (MCO), 28 percent of beneficiaries receive care from physicians who contract directly with the state through a Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) system, and just 3 percent participate in the state’s Fee-For-Service (FFS) program.³ The state began contracting with MCOs on July 1, 2021, after a long transition that began in 2015 after the North Carolina General Assembly enacted Session Law SL-2015-245 to transition the state’s Medicaid program from FFS to an MCO based model.⁵ The state contracts with the following five MCOs: AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina, Inc. (AmeriHealth), Healthy Blue of North Carolina (Blue Cross Blue Shield), UnitedHealthcare of North Carolina, Inc. (UnitedHealthcare), WellCare of North Carolina, Inc. (WellCare), and Carolina Complete Health, Inc. (Carolina Complete Health).⁶

Four out of the five MCOs (AmeriHealth⁷, Healthy Blue⁸, WellCare⁹, and Carolina Complete Health¹⁰) duplicate or link to North Carolina’s Preferred Drug List (PDL) and use identical prior authorization forms. UnitedHealthcare of North Carolina links to the state PDL but prior authorization forms do not appear to be available on its website.¹¹ North Carolina appears to have parity between MCOs and FFS.

State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

North Carolina has taken steps to significantly increase access to hepatitis C treatment. In November 2017, the state removed liver damage criteria.¹⁸ The state continues not to impose prescriber restrictions.¹⁹ In November 2020, the state began removing sobriety restrictions.²⁰ In October 2021, the state removed toxicology, alcohol and “high-risk behavior” screening requirements.²³

For all treatment regimens, the prescriber must attest to be “reasonably certain” that the treatment will “improve the beneficiary’s overall health status.”²⁴ Additionally, beneficiaries must be “evaluated for readiness for treatment” and must agree “to be compliant with therapy, follow-up appointments and labs.”²⁵

Therapy duration is determined by the prescribed regimen and a patient’s clinical status.²⁶ North Carolina updated its Preferred Drug List (PDL) most recently on June 1, 2021³⁰. Currently, Mavyret or sofosbuvir-velpatasvir (generic for Epclusa) and Vosevi are listed as preferred regimens.³¹ Epclusa, Harvoni, ledipasvir-sofosbuvir, Sovaldi, Viekira, and Zepatier are listed as non-preferred.³²

Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

North Carolina does not have any liver damage requirements. A diagnosis of chronic hepatitis C is required for treatment coverage.³³

North Carolina no longer imposes explicit sobriety restrictions on preferred regimens. However, providers must attest that they are “reasonably certain” that the treatment will “improve the beneficiary’s overall health status.”³⁴ Additionally, beneficiaries must be “evaluated for readiness for treatment” and must agree “to be compliant with therapy, follow-up appointments and labs.”³⁵ Depending on how providers interpret this requirement, this could still create a barrier to treatment for patients with substance use disorder.

Prescriber Restrictions

North Carolina does not appear to impose any prescriber restrictions.³⁸

Points of Contact for Questions & Concerns about North Carolina’s State of Hepatitis C Medicaid Access

Medicaid:³⁹ Dave Richard, Deputy Secretary, Division of Medical Assistance, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

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Drug Utilization Review Board:⁴⁰ John C. Stancil, Jr., Director, Pharmacy and DMEPOS Programs, Division of Medical Assistance, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

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¹ North Carolina State Profile, HepVu (Accessed December 2021): <https://hepvu.org/state/north-carolina>.

² Medicaid & CHIP in North Carolina, By-State, Medicaid.org (Accessed December 2021): <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/by-state/stateprofile.html?state=north-carolina>.

³ Share of Medicaid Population Covered Under Different Delivery Systems, Medicaid Managed Care Tracker, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, July 1, 2021 (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>; See Also: Fact Sheet, NC Medicaid Managed Care: <https://files.nc.gov/ncdma/documents/Medicaid/NCMT-Fact-Sheet-ManagedCarePopulations-20210429.pdf>.

⁵ General Assembly of North Carolina, Session Law 2015-245, (Session 2015): <https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2015-2016/SL2015-245.html>; North Carolina’s Transformation to Medicaid Managed Care: <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/transformation>.

⁶ North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services: <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/transformation/health-plans>.

⁷ AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina Pharmacy Resources (Accessed December 2021): <https://www.amerihhealthcaritasnc.com/provider/pharmacy/index.aspx>; See also AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina Pharmacy Prior Authorizations: Hepatitis C (Accessed December 2021): <https://www.amerihhealthcaritasnc.com/provider/resources/pharmacy-prior-auth.aspx>.

⁸ BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina, Policies, Manuals and Guides: Pharmacy Criteria (Accessed December 2021): <https://provider.healthyluenc.com/north-carolina-provider/manuals-and-guides>; BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina, Preferred Drug List (Accessed December 2021): https://provider.healthyluenc.com/docs/gpp/NCNC_CAID_Pharmacy_PreferredDrugList.pdf; BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina, Forms: Pharmacy (Accessed December 2021): <https://provider.healthyluenc.com/north-carolina-provider/forms>.

⁹ WellCare North Carolina, Medicaid, Forms: Prior Authorization Forms (Accessed December 2021): <https://www.wellcarenc.com/providers/medicaid/forms.html>; See also WellCare North Carolina, Medicaid, Pharmacy: Preferred Drug List (Accessed December 2021): <https://www.wellcarenc.com/providers/medicaid/forms.html>.

¹⁰ Carolina Complete Health Network, Pharmacy: Preferred Drug List and Prior Approval Request Forms (Accessed December 2021): <https://network.carolinacompletehealth.com/resources/pharmacy.html>.

¹¹ UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Medicaid Lookup Tools: Find A Drug: <https://www.uhccommunityplan.com/nc/medicaid/medicaid-uhc-community-plan/find-a-provider-or-pharmacy#collapse-1135227412>;

¹⁸ NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications, Amended Date: October 1, 2021 (Accessed December 2021):

<https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/dam/jcr:b7666761-3601-465b-9bc0-76418dabd531/PA%20Criteria-Hepatitis%20C%204%2020202020.pdf>.

¹⁹ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

²⁰ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

²³ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

²⁴ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications; See also Prior Authorization Forms for Eplusa, Harvoni, Mavyret, Sofosbuvir-Velpatasvir, Sovaldi, Viekira, Vosevi, and Zepatier: <https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/public/providers/pharmacy/forms/Hepatitis-C.html>.

²⁵ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

²⁶ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

³⁰ North Carolina Division of Health Benefits, North Carolina Medicaid and Health Choice Preferred Drug List (PDL), Effective: June 1, 2021: <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/media/9463/open>.

³¹ Ibid. North Carolina Division of Health Benefits, North Carolina Medicaid and Health Choice Preferred Drug List (PDL), Effective: June 1, 2021.

³² Ibid. North Carolina Division of Health Benefits, North Carolina Medicaid and Health Choice Preferred Drug List (PDL), Effective: June 1, 2021.

³³ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

³⁴ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications; See also Prior Authorization Forms for Eplusa, Harvoni, Mavyret, Sofosbuvir-Velpatasvir, Sovaldi, Viekira, Vosevi, and Zepatier: <https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/public/providers/pharmacy/forms/Hepatitis-C.html>.

³⁵ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

³⁸ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications.

³⁹ Contact, North Carolina Division of Medical Assistance, DHHS (Accessed January 2021): <https://dma.ncdhhs.gov/contact>.

⁴⁰ Drug Utilization Review Board, Committees and Work Groups, Division of Medical Assistance (Accessed January 2021): <https://dma.ncdhhs.gov/get-involved/committees-work-groups#dur>; See also Outpatient Pharmacy Services, Division of Medical Assistance (Accessed January 2021): <https://dma.ncdhhs.gov/providers/programs-services/Prescription-drugs/Outpatient-Pharmacy-Services>.