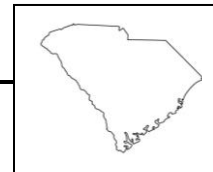


# Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

## South Carolina

Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 35,600<sup>1</sup>



Grade	Summary
<p><b>D-</b></p>	<p><b>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions:</b> Fee-For-Service (FFS) and two managed care organizations (MCOs), FirstChoice, and Healthy Blue, do not impose liver damage requirements. Three MCOs, Absolute Total Care, Humana Healthy Horizons, and Molina Healthcare, do not make hepatitis C coverage criteria publicly available.</p> <p><b>Sobriety Restrictions:</b> FFS requires six months’ abstinence from alcohol and substances. FirstChoice requires the provider to attest that they have provided substance use counseling and offered referral for substance use disorder treatment. Healthy Blue does not appear to impose sobriety restrictions. Three MCOs, Absolute Total Care, Humana Healthy Horizons, and Molina Healthcare, do not make hepatitis C coverage criteria publicly available.</p> <p><b>Prescriber Restrictions:</b> FFS and FirstChoice require treatment to be prescribed by a specialist. Healthy Blue does not appear to impose prescriber restrictions. Three MCOs, Absolute Total Care, Humana Healthy Horizons, and Molina Healthcare, do not make hepatitis C coverage criteria publicly available.</p> <p><b>Recommendations to Improve Patient Access:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate sobriety and prescriber restrictions.</li> <li>• Restore parity across FFS and MCOs and transparency regarding hepatitis C coverage criteria.</li> </ul> <p><i>Grade Rationale: As a result of annulling the carve out of hepatitis C medication from MCO contracts effective July 1, 2020, South Carolina has lost parity and transparency across FFS and MCO programs. While FFS improved access by removing minimum fibrosis requirements, the state continues to impose stringent sobriety and prescriber restrictions. To improve their grade, in addition to removing sobriety and prescriber restrictions, the state should publish updated, less stringent criteria and require MCOs to make public their coverage criteria.</i></p>

### Overview

As of June 2021, South Carolina had 1,167,790 individuals enrolled in Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program.<sup>2</sup> South Carolina Medicaid, known as Healthy Connections, contracts with managed care organizations (MCOs) and operates a Fee-For-Service (FFS) program. Most beneficiaries, over 77 percent, are enrolled the MCO program.<sup>3</sup> The remaining 23 percent participate in FFS. On July 1, 2015, the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services “carved out” hepatitis C medications from MCO contracts.<sup>4</sup> However, this carve out was reversed effective July 1, 2020 and hepatitis C prior authorization requirements are now determined by individual MCOs.<sup>5</sup> South Carolina contracts with 5 MCOs: Absolute Total Care, First Choice, Healthy Blue, Humana Healthy Horizons, and Molina Healthcare.<sup>6</sup>

### State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

Prior to 2017, South Carolina Fee-for-Service (FFS) required severe liver damage (F3 or greater) to access treatment.<sup>7</sup> The current FFS PA form, last updated in March 2019, requires a diagnosis of chronic hepatitis C including HCV antibody, RNA, and genotype lab results collected no more than 12 months prior to request.<sup>8</sup> Notably, South Carolina imposes stringent sobriety and prescriber restrictions, including six months’ abstinence and the requirement for treatment to be prescribed by a specialist. The PA form also requires HCV RNA levels at four and 12 weeks of treatment.<sup>9</sup> The Preferred Drug List (PDL) includes Mavyret, sofosbuvir/velpatasvir, and Vosevi.<sup>10</sup>

As a result of annulling the carve out of hepatitis C medication from MCO contracts, South Carolina lost parity and transparency across FFS and MCO programs. Absolute Total Care, Humana Healthy Horizons, and Molina Healthcare do not make hepatitis C coverage criteria publicly available. Absolute Total Care and Humana Healthy Horizons preferred agents include Mavyret and sofosbuvir/velpatasvir.<sup>11,12</sup> Molina Healthcare preferred agents include ledipasvir/sofosbuvir and sofosbuvir/velpatasvir, Solvadi, Vosevi, and Zepatier.<sup>13</sup>

FirstChoice imposes less stringent sobriety criteria than FFS, and similar fibrosis and prescriber restrictions. The PA form requires HCV genotype, RNA, and other relevant labs to be collected within three months of starting therapy. It also inquires about compliance issues and previous treatment for hepatitis C. Preferred drugs include Mavyret, sofosbuvir/velpatasvir, and ledipasvir/sofosbuvir.<sup>14</sup>

Healthy Blue appears to impose less stringent sobriety and prescriber criteria than FFS. Healthy Blue requires a diagnosis of chronic hepatitis C which includes genotype, HCV RNA, and baseline evaluation of liver fibrosis. Preferred agents include Mavyret and sofosbuvir/velpatasvir.<sup>15</sup>

