

# Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

## Tennessee

Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 69,100<sup>1</sup>



| Grade | Summary  |
|-------|--|
| A-    | <p><b>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions:</b> Tennessee Fee-For-Service (FFS) and managed care organizations (MCOs) do not impose liver damage restrictions.</p> <p><b>Sobriety Restrictions:</b> Tennessee FFS and MCOs do not impose any sobriety restrictions.</p> <p><b>Prescriber Restrictions:</b> For most patients, Tennessee allows any physician to prescribe treatment, without requiring a consultation with a specialist. However, for patients in certain clinical situations (including decompensated cirrhosis, history of HIV, co-infection with HBV, or prior treatment for HCV), the state requires a prescription to be written by or in consultation with a specialist.</p> <p><b>Recommendations to Improve Patient Access:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remove remaining prescriber restrictions.</li><li>• Maintain parity across FFS and MCO programs and transparency regarding hepatitis C coverage requirements.</li><li>• Remove prior authorization requirements for patients who qualify for simplified treatment.</li></ul> <p><i>Grade Rationale: Tennessee Medicaid does not impose liver damage restrictions, and allows all physicians to prescribe treatment for most patients. In March 2022, Tennessee dramatically increased coverage by eliminating all sobriety restrictions. The A- grade reflects Tennessee's substantial improvement, while recognizing that some barriers to treatment still exist.</i></p> |

### Background

As of May 2021, Tennessee had 1,619,678 individuals enrolled in Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).<sup>2</sup> Tennessee's Medicaid, known as TennCare, enrolls all beneficiaries in managed care organizations (MCOs).<sup>3</sup> TennCare contracts with three MCOs: AMERIGROUP Tennessee, BlueCare Tennessee, and UnitedHealthcare Community Plan.<sup>4</sup> While pharmacy services are coordinated by each MCO, the state finances pharmacy benefits directly through a pharmacy benefit manager.<sup>5</sup> Effective January 1, 2020, Optum Rx is TennCare's pharmacy benefit manager.<sup>6</sup> The FFS coverage criteria, as administered by Optum Rx, applies across the entire Medicaid program.<sup>7</sup>

### State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

Prescription drug benefits are carved out of MCO contracts and managed by the state's contracted pharmacy benefit manager, Optum Rx.<sup>8</sup> Tennessee Medicaid requires a diagnosis of chronic HCV, but does not restrict treatment based on liver damage or fibrosis score. As of March 1, 2022, Tennessee Medicaid no longer restricts treatment based on sobriety.<sup>9</sup> In most cases, Tennessee allows any physician to prescribe hepatitis C treatment, and does not require the patient to consult a specialist.<sup>10</sup> However, if the patient has a "history of HIV, HBV co-infection, prior history with direct acting hepatitis C antivirals, or decompensated cirrhosis," treatment must be prescribed by or in consultation with a specialist with experience treating hepatitis C "(e.g., Hepatology, Infectious Disease or Gastroenterology)."<sup>11</sup> Tennessee Medicaid's preferred drug list includes Eplclusa, Harvoni, ledipasvir/sofosbuvir, Mavyret, and sofosbuvir/velpatasvir as preferred, and Harvoni Pak, Sovaldi and Sovaldi Pak, Viekira, Vosevi, and Zepatier as non-preferred.<sup>12</sup>

Because pharmacy benefits are administered by the state's pharmacy benefit manager, these coverage and treatment requirements apply across the entire program regardless of MCO enrollment.

### Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

Tennessee Medicaid does not require a minimum level of liver damage prior to treatment.<sup>13</sup>

### Sobriety Restrictions

As of March 1, 2022, Tennessee Medicaid no longer imposes any sobriety restrictions.<sup>14</sup>

Tennessee allows any physician to prescribe hepatitis C treatment, but if the patient has a “history of HIV, HBV co-infection, prior history with direct acting hepatitis C antivirals, or decompensated cirrhosis,” treatment must be prescribed by or in consultation with a specialist with experience treating hepatitis C “(e.g., Hepatology, Infectious Disease or Gastroenterology).”<sup>15</sup>

## Points of Contact for Questions & Concerns about Tennessee’s State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Access

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### Medicaid:<sup>16</sup> Stephen Smith, Deputy Commissioner and Director of TennCare

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<sup>1</sup> HepVu, Tennessee State Profile (Accessed December 2021): <https://hepvu.org/state/tennessee>.

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

<sup>3</sup> Share of Medicaid Population Covered Under Different Delivery Systems, Medicaid Managed Care Market Tracker, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Updated July 1, 2021 (Accessed December 2021):

<https://www.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>.

<sup>4</sup> TennCare Contracts, Tennessee Division of TennCare: <https://www.tn.gov/tenncare/information-statistics/tenncare-contracts.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, TennCare Contracts, Tennessee Division of TennCare; See also, e.g., Statewide Contract Between the State of Tennessee, d.b.a. TennCare and Amerigroup Tennessee Inc., Tennessee Division of TennCare, page 20:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tenncare/documents2/AmerigroupTennessee.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Pharmacy, Tennessee Division of TennCare: <https://www.tn.gov/tenncare/providers/pharmacy.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Contract Between the State of Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration Division of TennCare and Optum Rx, Inc., Tennessee Division of TennCare:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tenncare/documents2/Optum3186500600.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022 (Accessed March 1 2022):

<https://www.optumrx.com/content/dam/openenrollment/pdfs/Tenncare/home-page/preferred-drug-list/Criteria%20PDL.pdf>; See also Prior Authorization Forms, Optum Rx (Accessed March 2022):

[https://www.optumrx.com/oe\\_tenncare/prescriber](https://www.optumrx.com/oe_tenncare/prescriber).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022; See also Prior Authorization forms for Eplclusa, Harvoni, Mavyret, Sovaldi, Viekira, Vosevi, and Zepatier (Accessed March 2022): [https://www.optumrx.com/oe\\_tenncare/prescriber](https://www.optumrx.com/oe_tenncare/prescriber).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022.

<sup>12</sup> TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022: [https://www.optumrx.com/content/dam/openenrollment/pdfs/Tenncare/home-page/preferred-drug-list/Preferred%20Drug%20List%20\(PDL\).pdf](https://www.optumrx.com/content/dam/openenrollment/pdfs/Tenncare/home-page/preferred-drug-list/Preferred%20Drug%20List%20(PDL).pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, Clinical Criteria, Step Therapy, and Quantity Limits for TennCare Preferred Drug List (PDL), Optum Rx, March 1, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> Tennessee, Medicaid Directors, National Association of Medicaid Directors: <http://medicaiddirectors.org/about/medicaid-directors>; See also Information & Statistics: Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee Division of TennCare: <https://www.tn.gov/tenncare/information-statistics/deputy-commissioner.html>.