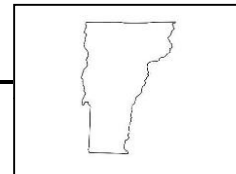


# Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

## Vermont

Estimated Number of Individuals Living with Hepatitis C: 3,700<sup>1</sup>



Grade	Summary
<b>A-</b>	<p><b>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions:</b> Vermont does not have any liver damage restrictions.</p> <p><b>Sobriety Restrictions:</b> Vermont does not have any sobriety restrictions.</p> <p><b>Prescriber Restrictions:</b> For most patients, Vermont allows any physician to prescribe treatment, and no longer requires consultation with a specialist. However, for patients in certain clinical situations (prior hepatitis C treatment, cirrhosis, HIV or hepatitis B positive, current pregnancy, known or suspected liver cancer, or prior liver transplantation), Vermont requires a prescription 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 transparency regarding hepatitis C coverage criteria.</li><li>• Remove prior authorization for patients who qualify for simplified treatment.</li></ul> <p><i>Grade Rationale: Vermont does not impose liver damage or sobriety restrictions. In March 2021, Vermont increased access by removing specialist prescriber requirements for most patients, but some patients remain subject to the restriction, including individuals who had prior hepatitis C treatment, which may serve as a barrier to access. In June 2021, Vermont increased access by removing specialty pharmacy restrictions. The A-grade recognizes that some prescribing restrictions still thwart access.</i></p>

### Background

As of May 2021, Vermont had 177,688 individuals enrolled in Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).<sup>2</sup> Vermont’s Medicaid, known as Green Mountain Care, is run by the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA). Implemented on October 1, 2005, the Global Commitment, a waiver from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), converted the DVHA to a public Managed Care Entity (MCE).<sup>3</sup> The Agency of Human Services pays the MCE a lump sum premium payment for the provision of all Medicaid services in the state.<sup>4</sup> All Medicaid beneficiaries are managed by one entity that establishes the coverage criteria, formulary, and prior authorization (PA) requirements for the whole program.<sup>5</sup>

### State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

In December 2017, Vermont improved access to hepatitis C medications by removing liver damage criteria.<sup>6</sup> Patients with no liver damage (F0 and greater) can qualify for treatment.<sup>7</sup> Vermont does not impose sobriety restrictions.<sup>8</sup> In March 2021, Vermont removed the specialist consultation requirement for patients who qualify for “simplified treatment.”<sup>9</sup>

Vermont still requires consultation with a gastroenterologist, hepatologist, infectious disease specialist, or other hepatitis specialist for patients who present any of the following clinical factors: prior hepatitis C treatment, cirrhosis, HIV or hepatitis B positive, current pregnancy, known or suspected hepatocellular carcinoma, prior liver transplantation.<sup>10</sup> The consultation must have taken place within the past year and include documentation of the requested treatment regimen.<sup>11</sup>

The state’s preferred Direct-Acting Antivirals (DAAs) are Mavyret and Sofosbuvir/Velpatasvir.<sup>12</sup> The state lists Epclusa, Harvoni, Ledipasvir/sofosbuvir, Sovaldi, Viekira PAK, Vosevi, and Zepatier as non-preferred.<sup>13</sup> Providers must submit clinical documentation supporting the use of a non-preferred agent or regimen with the prior authorization.<sup>14</sup>

In June 2021, Vermont removed its specialist pharmacy requirement, and patients may now fill their DAA prescriptions at any Vermont Medicaid enrolled pharmacy.<sup>15</sup>

### Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

Vermont does not impose any liver damage restrictions.<sup>16</sup>

## Sobriety Restrictions

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Vermont does not impose sobriety restrictions.<sup>17</sup>

## Prescriber Restrictions

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Patients who qualify for “simplified treatment” do not have to consult with a specialist.<sup>18</sup> Patients who do not qualify for simplified treatment due to certain additional medical factors (prior hepatitis C treatment, cirrhosis, HIV or hepatitis B positive, current pregnancy, known or suspected liver cancer, or prior liver transplantation) are still required to obtain a prescription written by or in consultation with a hepatologist, gastroenterologist, infectious disease specialist, or other hepatitis specialist.<sup>19</sup>

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

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**Medicaid:**<sup>20</sup> **Adaline Strumolo, Acting Commissioner, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont**

NOB 1 South, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671; Telephone: 802-241-0453; Email Address: [adaline.strumolo@vermont.gov](mailto:adaline.strumolo@vermont.gov)

**Drug Utilization Review Board (DUR):**<sup>21</sup> **Stacey Baker, Health Program Administrator, Pharmacy, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont**

NOB 1 South, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671; Telephone: (802) 241-0140 Email Address: [AHS.DVHAph@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.DVHAph@vermont.gov)

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Global Commitment to Health 11-2-00194/1, Sect. 1115 Demonstration Year: 10 (2015) State of Vermont Agency of Human Services (Accessed December 2021): <https://humanservices.vermont.gov/about-us/medicaid-administration/global-commitment-health-1115-waiver/quarterly-and-annual-progress>; See also: Handbook, Health Care Programs, Department of Vermont Health Access, Green Mountain Care (Accessed December 2021): [https://www.greenmountaincare.org/sites/gmc/files/VT\\_Hlthcare%20Programs%20Handbook\\_%202019%20final%20update%201.21.20.pdf](https://www.greenmountaincare.org/sites/gmc/files/VT_Hlthcare%20Programs%20Handbook_%202019%20final%20update%201.21.20.pdf); Medicaid & Dr. Dynasaur, Vermont Health Connect, Help Center (Accessed December 2021): <https://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/compare-plans/medicaid-and-dr-dynasaur>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Global Commitment to Health 11-2-00194/1, Sect. 1115 Demonstration Year: 10 (2015) State of Vermont Agency of Human Services.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Global Commitment to Health 11-2-00194/1, Sect. 1115 Demonstration Year: 10 (2015) State of Vermont Agency of Human Services.

<sup>6</sup> Medicaid Provider Letter, Department of Vermont Health Access, Agency of Human Services, State of Vermont, December 4, 2017 (Accessed December 2021):

<http://dvha.vermont.gov/sites/dvha/files/documents/providers/Pharmacy/hepatitis-c-fibrosis-restriction-changes-final.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. Medicaid Provider Letter, Department of Health Access, Agency of Human Services, State of Vermont, December 4, 2017

<sup>8</sup> Medicaid Provider Letter, Department of Health Access, Agency of Human Services, State of Vermont, February 17, 2017 (Accessed December 2021):

<https://dvha.vermont.gov/sites/dvha/files/documents/providers/Pharmacy/hepc-criteria-changes-02.17.17-final.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021 (Accessed December 2021):

[https://dvha.vermont.gov/sites/dvha/files/documents/providers/Pharmacy/HepC\\_VT\\_3.23.21.pdf](https://dvha.vermont.gov/sites/dvha/files/documents/providers/Pharmacy/HepC_VT_3.23.21.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. Vermont Preferred Drug List and Drugs Requiring Prior Authorization, Updated 10/08/2021.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. Vermont Preferred Drug List and Drugs Requiring Prior Authorization, Updated 10/08/2021.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Vermont Preferred Drug List and Drugs Requiring Prior Authorization, Updated: 10/08/2021.

<sup>15</sup> Medicaid Provider Letter, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, June 15, 2021 (Accessed December 2021):

<https://dvha.vermont.gov/sites/dvha/files/documents/providers/Pharmacy/HCV%20DAA%20Specialty%20Changes.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021; See also: Vermont Preferred Drug List and Drugs Requiring Prior Authorization,

Updated 10/08/2021 (Accessed December 2021): <https://dvha.vermont.gov/sites/dvha/files/documents/providers/Pharmacy/VERMONT%20PDL.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Prior Authorization Request Form, Hepatitis C Treatment, Department of Vermont Health Access, State of Vermont, March 23, 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Vermont Health Access Commissioner’s Office (Accessed December 2021): <https://dvha.vermont.gov/about-us/dvha-commissioner>; See also State of Vermont – Online Directory (Accessed December

2021): [https://secure.vermont.gov/phonebook/index.php?page=1&first\\_name=adaline&last\\_name=strumolo&city=](https://secure.vermont.gov/phonebook/index.php?page=1&first_name=adaline&last_name=strumolo&city=)

<sup>21</sup> Drug Utilization Review Board Description & Information, Department of Vermont Health Access (Accessed December 2021): <https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/drug-utilization-review-board/durb-contact-information>; See also: DURB Process for Making Public Comment: <https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/drug-utilization-review-board/durb-process-making-public-comment> (Accessed December 2021).