

Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Report Card

North Carolina



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

Grade	Summary
A	<p>Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions: North Carolina does not impose any liver damage restrictions.</p> <p>Sobriety Restrictions: North Carolina does not impose sobriety restrictions on preferred regimens, but requires that patients with a history of substance use in the last year must be enrolled in a treatment program and agree to abstinence during treatment as well as toxicology screening for non-preferred regimens.</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 sobriety restrictions for non-preferred regimens.• Consider waiving prior authorization for treatment-naïve patients. <p><i>Grade Rationale: North Carolina has made significant progress in expanding access to hepatitis C treatment, and now imposes no restrictions on the use of its preferred regimens. With minimal changes, North Carolina could improve its grade to an A+.</i></p>

Overview

As of September 2020, North Carolina had 1,919,854 individuals enrolled in Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).² North Carolina currently operates a Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) system and a Fee-For-Service (FFS) program.³ 90 percent of beneficiaries participate in the PCCM and 10 percent in FFS.⁴ The state does not currently contract with any Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). However, in September 2015, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted Session Law SL-2015-245 to fundamentally transform and transition the state’s Medicaid program from a FFS to a MCO based model.⁵ The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will contract with two types of pre-paid health plans (PHPs): provider-led entities and commercial plans.⁶ In a subsequent law, the General Assembly mandated that pharmacy among other services be covered by PHPs.⁷ The transformation process was suspended in November of 2019.⁸ In July of 2020, Medicaid Managed Care transformation efforts restarted with a July 1, 2021 expected launch date.⁹ Presently, the state establishes hepatitis C coverage criteria for all Medicaid enrollees. Under the new MCO model—yet to be implemented—hepatitis C coverage policies could be reevaluated in the future.

State of Medicaid Hepatitis C Treatment Access

North Carolina has taken steps to significantly increase access to hepatitis C treatment. Previously, the state required at least moderate liver damage (F2 or greater) to qualify for therapy.¹⁰ In November 2017, the state removed liver damage criteria.¹¹ The state continues not to impose prescriber restrictions.¹² In November 2020, the state removed the requirement for beneficiaries with history in the last year of alcohol abuse to be in a treatment program for preferred regimens.¹³ However, this requirement persists for non-preferred treatment regimens.¹⁴ For all treatment, patients must “agree to toxicology and/or alcohol screens as needed. . .” while treatment is ongoing.¹⁵ The prescriber must also be “reasonably certain” that the treatment will “improve the beneficiary’s overall health status.”¹⁶

Therapy duration is determined by the prescribed regimen and a patient’s clinical status.¹⁷ After initial approval, the prescriber must request and receive reauthorization.¹⁸ To continue treatment, a patient must not have any signs of high-risk behavior (alcohol or substance use) and must complete treatment evaluation appointments.¹⁹ Reauthorization “may be authorized for beneficiaries who are compliant to the regimen as verified by the prescriber and beneficiary’s medication fill history.”²⁰ With the emergence of pan-genotypic Direct-Acting antiviral (DAA) regimens, North Carolina updated its Preferred Drug List (PDL) most recently on January 1, 2021²¹. Currently, Mayvret or sofosbuvir-velpatasvir (generic for Epclusa) and Vosevi are preferred regimens.²²

Liver Damage (Fibrosis) Restrictions

North Carolina does not have any liver damage requirements.

Sobriety Restrictions

North Carolina does not impose sobriety restrictions on preferred regimens, but requires that patients with a history of substance use in the last year must be enrolled in a treatment program and agree to abstinence during treatment as well as toxicology screening for non-preferred regimens.²³ Prescribers must confirm that they see no signs of high risk behavior such as alcoholism or IV drug use before reauthorizing treatment. Patients must also agree to toxicology and/or alcohol screens as needed.²⁴

Prescriber Restrictions

North Carolina does not appear to impose any prescriber restrictions.²⁵

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

Medicaid²⁶: Dave Richard, Deputy Secretary, Division of Medical Assistance, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

2501 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-2501; Telephone: 919-855-4100; Email Address: dave.richard@dhhs.nc.gov

Drug Utilization Review Board²⁷: John C. Stancil, Jr., Director, Pharmacy and DMEPOS Programs, Division of Medical Assistance, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Kirby Building, Room 297, 1985 Umstead Drive, Raleigh, NC 27603; Telephone: 919-855-4300; Email Address: john.stancil@dhhs.nc.gov

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

² Medicaid & CHIP in North Carolina, By-State, Medicaid.org (Accessed January 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, 2019 (Accessed January 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>

⁴ Ibid. Share of Medicaid Population Covered Under Different Delivery Systems, Medicaid Managed Care Tracker, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, July 1, 2019 (Accessed January 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>

⁵ General Assembly of North Carolina, Session Law 2015-245, (Session 2015): <https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2015-2016/SL2015-245.html>

⁶ Ibid. General Assembly of North Carolina, Session Law 2015-245, (Session 2015): <https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2015-2016/SL2015-245.html>

⁷ Session Law 2016-121, Senate Bill 838, An Act to Require Further Reporting from DHHS Related to the Transformation of Medicaid and the NC Health Choice Programs and to Modify Certain Provisions of the Medicaid Transformation Legislation, General Assembly North Carolina, Session 2015 (Accessed January 2021): <http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/PDF/2015-2016/SL2016-121.pdf>

⁸ North Carolina's Transformation to Medicaid Managed Care, North Carolina Division of Health Benefits (Accessed January 2021): <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/transformation>

⁹ Ibid. North Carolina's Transformation to Medicaid Managed Care, North Carolina Division of Health Benefits (Accessed January 2021): <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/transformation>

¹⁰ NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications (Accessed January 2021): <https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/dam/jcr:b7666761-3601-465b-9bc0-76418dabd531/PA%20Criteria-Hepatitis%20C%204%2020%202020.pdf>

¹¹ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications (Accessed January 2021): <https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/dam/jcr:b7666761-3601-465b-9bc0-76418dabd531/PA%20Criteria-Hepatitis%20C%204%2020%202020.pdf>

¹² Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications

¹³ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications

¹⁴ NC Tracks, Hepatitis C: <https://www.nctracks.nc.gov/content/public/providers/pharmacy/forms/Hepatitis-C.html> (compare, e.g., Eplclusa's PA form with Sovaldi's PA form).

¹⁵ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications

¹⁶ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications

¹⁷ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications

¹⁸ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications

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

²¹ North Carolina Division of Health Benefits, North Carolina Medicaid and Health Choice Preferred Drug List (PDL), Effective: January 1, 2021: https://files.nc.gov/ncdma/documents/files/PDL_January_1_2021.pdf

²² Ibid. North Carolina Division of Health Benefits, North Carolina Medicaid and Health Choice Preferred Drug List (PDL), Effective: January 1, 2021: https://files.nc.gov/ncdma/documents/files/PDL_January_1_2021.pdf

²³ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications (Accessed January 2021)

²⁴ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications (Accessed January 2021)

²⁵ Ibid. NC Division of Medical Assistance, Outpatient Pharmacy Prior Approval Criteria Hepatitis C Virus Medications (Accessed January 2021)

²⁶ Contact, North Carolina Division of Medical Assistance, DHHS (Accessed January 2021): <https://dma.ncdhhs.gov/contact>

²⁷ 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>