

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Department of Health Care Finance**



Office of the Senior Deputy Director/Medicaid Director

**Transmittal # 19-27**

**TO:** District of Columbia Medicaid Providers

**FROM:** Melisa Byrd *MB*  
Senior Deputy Director/State Medicaid Director

**DATE:** December 19, 2019

**SUBJECT: Removal of the Co-Pay for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Drug Products.**

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The purpose of this transmittal is to inform District of Columbia (DC) Medicaid Providers that effective January 1, 2020, the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) is eliminating the \$1.00 co-pay for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) drug products used to treat substance use disorders (SUD) for all Fee for Service (FFS) Medicaid beneficiaries.

In March 2019, Mayor Muriel Bowser launched the initiative, “*Live. Long. DC.*”, a strategic plan to Reduce Opioid Use, Misuse and Related Deaths. In a concerted effort to ensure access to treatment is available and barriers are removed, the District Medicaid program assessed its treatment system. It was determined that there were access and barrier issues in the District Medicaid treatment system, including prior authorization and co-pay requirements. As a result, in April 2019, DHCF produced a policy, “Removal of Prior Authorization Requirements for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Drug Products” used to treat an opioid use disorder (OUD) and alcohol use disorder (AUD).

On November 6, 2019, the District’s Medicaid Section 1115 Behavioral Health Transformation Demonstration was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Demonstration is a part of a larger city-wide effort to combat the opioid epidemic that will allow the District’s Medicaid program to pay for a more comprehensive continuum of behavioral health services for Medicaid beneficiaries. Through the Demonstration, DHCF will alleviate any potential financial barriers to Medicaid beneficiaries by eliminating the \$1.00 co-pay for MAT drug products used to treat SUD.

Effective January 1, 2020, the FFS Medicaid Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) Magellan electronic pharmacy claims system will automatically waive the \$1.00 co-pay for MAT drug products used to treat SUD. Please note that there will be no change required to the current

process for pharmacies submitting prescription claims for MAT drug products used to treat SUD via the FFS (PBM) electronic pharmacy claims adjudication system.

If you have any questions or have any problems with obtaining medication after the change goes into effect, please contact the Division of Clinician, Pharmacy, and Acute Provider Services: Charlene Fairfax, Senior Pharmacist at (202) 442-9076 or e-mail: [charlene.fairfax@dc.gov](mailto:charlene.fairfax@dc.gov); Gidey Amare, Pharmacist at (202) 442-5952 or e-mail: [gidey.amare@dc.gov](mailto:gidey.amare@dc.gov); Jonas Terry, Pharmacist at (202) 478-1415 or e-mail: [jonas.terry@dc.gov](mailto:jonas.terry@dc.gov); or Magellan (Pharmacy Benefit Manager) at 1-800-273-4962 (Provider Phone Line).

cc: Medical Society of the District of Columbia  
DC Hospital Association  
DC Primary Care Association  
DC Health Care Association  
DC Home Care Association  
DC Behavioral Health Association  
DC Coalition of Disability Service Providers