

Important Notice from Blue Cross for Insulin Users

Preferred brand of insulin

Effective April 1, 2010, Novolin[®] and Novolog[®] will be the preferred insulin drugs for IBC prescription drug programs and Humulin[®], Humalog[®], ReliOn[®]/Novolin[®], and Apidra[®] insulin will now be considered non-preferred for all programs. For Select Drug Program members, Novolin and Novolog will be the only insulin covered at the brand-formulary level, while Humulin, Humalog, and ReliOn/Novolin insulin will be removed from the Select Drug Program formulary.

The FutureScripts Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, whose members include practicing physicians and pharmacists from the area, have determined that Novolin and Novolog are clinically equal to Humulin, Humalog, ReliOn/Novolin, and Apidra insulin in lowering blood sugar levels, which is a key clinical marker in diabetes management.

New prior authorization requirement

Also, effective April 1, 2010, all newly prescribed non-preferred insulin will require prior authorization. Members who are currently taking non-preferred insulin do not have to obtain prior authorization until July 1, 2010. Prior authorization requests will be reviewed in accordance with our established criteria, and, if approved, non-preferred insulin will be covered at the appropriate cost-sharing level. If denied, non-preferred insulin will not be a covered benefit.

Reason for changes

Controlling overall health care costs for our customers and our members – and improving the lives of those affected by diabetes – is a top priority for IBC. About one in nine people in Philadelphia have diabetes — nearly three percent higher than the national average (11 percent) — making it one of the costliest conditions to treat. By selecting two preferred insulin drugs, we are better positioned to control costs while still providing members with access to effective medications.

What members should do

Since it is essential for members to maintain their insulin therapy to help prevent many diabetes-related health problems, we are encouraging members who take Humulin, Humalog, ReliOn/Novolin, or Apidra to talk with their doctor to discuss which insulin is right for them. If a member's doctor writes a prescription for Novolin and/or Novolog, the member will pay the appropriate copayment at participating retail pharmacies and through the mail order program, if applicable.

If a member's doctor recommends that the member continue using his or her current non-preferred insulin, he or she will be able to obtain this medication until June 30, 2010. After June 30, 2010, the member's doctor will need to complete a prior authorization form and receive approval from IBC for the member to continue to receive coverage for that brand of insulin medication.

Communicating to members and customers

Affected members will be notified of these changes. Select Drug Program members who are affected by the insulin and/or other formulary changes will be notified of the changes this month. All members, regardless of their drug coverage, taking a non-preferred brand of insulin through March 31 will receive a letter notifying them of the prior authorization requirement in May. These changes will also appear in the spring edition of *Update* magazine as well as online, where the updated formulary guide will also be posted.

Employer groups who have members directly affected by the insulin changes will receive a letter explaining the changes, why we are making them, and what they should do next.

Questions concerning these changes can be directed to The Administrators, Inc.'s Customer Service Department at (800)634-4428.