

# Provider Memorandum

## Update to Pharmacy Controls

Opioid toxicity and abuse is a public health concern in the United States due to the alarming increase in the number of opioid-related deaths. In 2016, the CDC reported 42,249 overdose deaths involving opioids which is five times higher than in 1999.<sup>1</sup>

Benefits of high-dose opioids for chronic pain are not established and at the same time, risks for serious harm related to opioid therapy increases at higher opioid dosages. Dosages of 50-100 morphine milligram equivalents (MME) a day have been found to increase risks for opioid overdose by factors of 1.9 to 4.6 compared to lower doses.<sup>2</sup>

Effective April 1, 2018, Molina Healthcare of Illinois (Molina) will implement the following Pharmacy control:

### **Maximum Morphine Equivalent (MME) dosing**

For any Member whose daily doses exceed 90mg/day of morphine milligram equivalents (MME), a prior authorization (PA) will be required. This measure does not apply to any Member with cancer or who already is enrolled in hospice or palliative care.

Safe and appropriate opioid prescribing and utilization is a priority for all of us in healthcare. We appreciate your continued support and dedication in providing high quality care to Molina Healthcare of Illinois (Molina) Members.

Providers may access additional Opioid-safety and Substance Use Disorder resources at [www.molinahealthcare.com](http://www.molinahealthcare.com) under the Health Resource tab. For more information, consult with your Provider Network Manager or the Provider Network Management Department at (630) 203-3965 or via email at [IllinoisProviders@MolinaHealthcare.com](mailto:IllinoisProviders@MolinaHealthcare.com).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/rr/rr6501e1.htm>