



Aetna Better Health[®] of Kansas

HEDIS[®] News you can use

Risk of Continued Opioid Use (COU)

Measure description:

The percentage of members 18 years of age and older who have a new episode of opioid use that puts them at risk for continued opioid use. Two rates are reported:

1. The percentage of members with at least 15 days of prescription opioids in a 30-day period.
2. The percentage of members with at least 31 days of prescription opioids in a 62-day period.

New episodes of opioid use are captured from November 1 of the year prior to the measurement year through October 31 of the measurement year (Intake period).

Members with any of the following during the 12 months prior to the earliest prescription dispensing date for an opioid medication during the Intake Period are excluded:

- Cancer
- Sickle cell disease
- Palliative care
- Members in hospice
- Those residing in an assisted or custodial care environment

How you can help:

Assist patients with identifying alternative pain management methods to lower their risk of developing opioid dependence:

- Cold and heat
- Acupuncture
- Topical pain relievers when clinically indicated
- Corticosteroid injections when clinically indicated
- Exercise and weight management
- Chiropractic manipulation
- Physical therapy
- Stress reduction techniques
- Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS)
- Mind-body techniques (meditation, breathing exercising, yoga)
- Massage therapy

Work with patients who are ready to cut down on use to develop a treatment plan (these patients may not need a formal treatment program):

- Avoid situations where they may be pressured to use opioids or feel uncomfortable being around others who may have opioids
- Have them list in writing reasons to stop opioid use (getting healthy, sleeping better, improving relationships, having a successful job)
- Set a goal for reducing and stopping use (how much they will cut down and the date they wish to stop use completely)
 - Use a diary to track use as they are cutting back
 - Incorporate drug free days into the treatment plan
- Remove all drugs from their house
- Exercise and keep busy

The following prescribed medications will count towards the measure:

Benzhydrocodone	Hydrocodone	Oxycodone
Buprenorphine (transdermal patch and buccal film)	Hydromorphone	Oxymorphone
Butorphanol	Levorphanol	Pentazocine
Codeine	Meperidine	Tapentadol
Dihydrocodeine	Methadone	Tramadol
Fentanyl	Morphine	
	Opium	

Patients trust you - Patients consider you their most trusted source of information when it comes to their health. When talking to patients, encourage and allow time for questions.

Thank you for the care you provide to our members

For questions or for more information, please contact Quality Management Department at **ABHKS_QM_Operations@aetna.com**.