



## Message to SC Pharmacies from NC Medicaid Pharmacy Director Regarding Hurricane Helene Patient Assistance

Good morning neighbors,

I hope that your states are recovering from the impacts of Hurricane Helen. The western part of NC is devastated, as I'm sure some of your areas are as well. We are working hard to get supplies and services to the people, but the conditions make this very challenging. As you can imagine many pharmacies were closed indefinitely and some are slowly coming back online but many with greatly limited services. Some are limited to cash only and their phone and internet remain extremely limited. Mobile pharmacies are coming in, but the road conditions make it difficult for members to get to a pharmacy. Some people have been fortunate to make it out of the state and are seeking medications from out of state pharmacies.

We are hearing reports of members not being able to get their medications due to either the pharmacy not being enrolled in NC Medicaid or even that their drug formularies in the state are different than NC. Most concerning is that members with opioid use disorder are being turned away for Suboxone prescriptions, because their state follows a different formulary than NC.

Would you please consider helping us by communicating to your pharmacies a few key pieces of information that may be helpful to them?

1. CMS has approved an expedited enrollment process, where the pharmacy can be enrolled within 24 hours in NC Medicaid, and claims back to 9.25 will be covered. Please see the bulletin link below for details on how to submit for enrollment. Enrollment should be simple and fast.
2. Please remind the pharmacies that NC's covered drugs should be nearly identical to their state. We have waived prior authorization and are allowing for early refills, by putting in an edit on the claim. Please see the bulletin link below for details. With the disaster edit, the claims will pay.
3. Please remind the pharmacies of the requirement to dispense prescriptions to Medicaid members, even when the member can't pay the copay.
4. Finally, please share our most recent bulletin and link to the PDL.

Some helpful links for the pharmacies:

NC Medicaid Preferred Drug List: <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/pdl-october-1-2024/download?attachment>

NC Medicaid Bulletin October 1, 2024: <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/blog/2024/10/01/update-nc-medicaid-temporary-flexibilities-due-hurricane-helene-october-1-2024>

NCAP Website for Hurricane Helene: <https://ncap.memberclicks.net/hurricane-helene-aftermath-information>

NC Board of Pharmacy Link to open pharmacies: <https://www.ncbop.org/emergencyoperatingpharmacieshelene.html>

Thank you so much for you help. If you are hearing of things that would be helpful to help your pharmacies serve NC Medicaid members, please do not hesitate to let us know.

-Angela Smith