



# Medicaid Programs That Improve The Safety of Opioid Use

## Spotlight on Idaho

To minimize overdoses and other harm associated with the misuse of prescription drugs, public and private insurance plans use patient review and restriction (PRR) programs to encourage the safe use of opioids and other controlled substances. Through PRRs, insurers assign patients who are at risk for substance use disorder (SUD) to predesignated pharmacies and prescribers to obtain these drugs. This fact sheet presents key features of Idaho's Medicaid fee-for-service (FFS) PRR program that were acquired from a 2015 survey and literature review by The Pew Charitable Trusts. The nationwide survey of Medicaid PRR programs captured information on program characteristics, structures, and trends. Of the 41 states that responded (plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico), 38 operate an FFS PRR. For more information on state responses, visit [www.pewtrusts.org/PRRreport](http://www.pewtrusts.org/PRRreport).

### PRR program initiation

PRR programs have been in operation in Medicaid FFS programs in the United States since the early 1970s. Idaho's PRR program was launched in 2003.

### Designated provider structure for PRRs

PRRs require patients to receive controlled substance prescriptions and related care from designated pharmacies, prescribers, hospitals, and/or other providers, such as dentists or pain management specialists. Patients enrolled in Idaho's PRR are assigned to a designated pharmacy and prescriber. The chart below compares Idaho's PRR program design with that of other programs.

|   | Assign patients to a pharmacy only | Assign patients to both a pharmacy and prescriber | Assign patients to a pharmacy, prescriber, and hospital |
|---|------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Number of responding programs (%) n = 38</b> | 13 (34%)                           | 17 (45%)  | 8 (21%)   |
| <b>Idaho's PRR</b>                              |                                    | ✓   |   |

## Criteria used to identify at-risk patients for PRR enrollment\*

Programs use specific, predetermined criteria to identify potentially at-risk beneficiaries for enrollment in a PRR. Idaho does not have specific criteria, but the following may be considered:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| ✓ | <p><b>Filling a certain number of controlled substance prescriptions</b><br/>Multiple controlled substances.</p> <p><b>Filling a certain number of other prescriptions</b></p>   |
| ✓ | <p><b>Utilizing a certain number of pharmacies to obtain controlled substances</b><br/>Multiple pharmacies.</p>  |
| ✓ | <p><b>Visiting a certain number of prescribers to obtain controlled substances</b><br/>Unnecessary use of providers or Medicaid services, including excessive provider visits; use of multiple providers; and use of multiple prescribing physicians.</p>  |
| ✓ | <p><b>Visiting a certain number of emergency rooms</b><br/>Frequent use of emergency room facilities for nonemergent conditions.</p> <p><b>Obtaining a certain number of controlled substances in the same therapeutic class</b></p>   |
| ✓ | <p><b>Referral/recommendation</b><br/>Recommendation from a medical professional or the recipient's primary care physician that the recipient has demonstrated abusive patterns and would benefit from the PRR program.</p>  |
| ✓ | <p><b>Other</b><br/>Drug abuse and/or drug withdrawal diagnosis; drug-seeking behavior as identified by a medical professional; use of drugs or other Medicaid services determined to be abusive by the department's medical or pharmacy consultant; overlapping prescription drugs with the same therapeutic class.</p> |

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\* With the exception of referrals/recommendations, these criteria are based on use over a specified time period. These time periods may vary between criteria and are specified where known. When publicly available, specific numbers triggering potential identification as at-risk are provided for the listed criteria.

## Patients automatically excluded from PRR enrollment

Some beneficiaries with pain that is difficult to manage are typically excluded from PRRs. Based on survey results from the District of Columbia and the 37 states with an FFS PRR, the most common reasons for automatic exclusion were that patients are:

- Receiving treatment for certain types of cancer (15 states).
- In long-term care (14 states).
- In hospice care (13 states).
- In skilled nursing facilities (10 states).

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**71%** Twenty-seven of the 37 states and DC automatically exclude at least one patient population from PRR enrollment to help ensure that these patients have access to effective pain management. Of these, 63% exclude more than one patient population.

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**29%** Eleven responding states do not automatically exclude patients, although they may choose to do so after performing a clinical review.

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Idaho automatically excludes patients in hospice care, those who are receiving cancer treatment, and patients with chronic malignant pain syndromes, such as multiple sclerosis, from PRR enrollment.

## Process for patient notification of PRR enrollment

Information was not available about Idaho's time frame for providing beneficiaries notification before PRR enrollment. Sixteen programs (46 percent of those responding<sup>†</sup>) provide beneficiaries with less than 30 days' notice before PRR enrollment. Fourteen states (40 percent) provide 30 days' notice, and five states (14 percent) provide beneficiaries with more than 30 days' notice before PRR enrollment.

## Process for patient appeal of PRR enrollment

Five programs (almost 14 percent of those responding<sup>†</sup>), including Idaho's PRR, provide beneficiaries with less than 30 days to appeal the decision to enroll them in the FFS PRR program. Specifically, Idaho allows beneficiaries 28 days to appeal upon receiving notification of PRR enrollment. Over 86 percent of PRR programs provide the beneficiary 30 or more days from notification to appeal the decision.

If an Idaho beneficiary chooses to appeal, he or she is not enrolled in the PRR program during the appeals process. Fifty-three percent of states follow this practice.

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\* These data represent 34 states and DC. This includes states with FFS PRR programs that either confirmed this information or make it publicly available.

† These data represent 36 states and DC. This includes states with FFS PRR programs that either confirmed this information or make it publicly available.

## Selection of designated providers

Thirty-six programs (95 percent of responding programs), including Idaho's PRR, allow for beneficiary input when selecting providers. Specifically, Idaho allows beneficiaries to submit pharmacy and prescriber preferences.

## Drugs managed through the PRR

Forty-seven percent of FFS PRR programs, including Idaho's PRR, require patients to receive controlled substances in Drug Enforcement Administration Schedules II-V from designated providers. Alternatively, 45 percent of programs require patients to receive controlled as well as noncontrolled substances identified as frequently subject to misuse or diversion, such as those used to treat HIV, from designated providers. Eight percent of programs require patients to receive only a subset of controlled substance schedules from designated providers.

## Additional services offered to PRR enrollees

Fifty-three percent of responding programs, including Idaho's PRR, do not offer additional services to PRR enrollees. Additional services may include general information on SUD, referrals for SUD treatment, referrals to pain specialists, case management services, and information on the appropriate use of health care services.

## PRR access to state prescription drug monitoring programs

Prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) are state-run electronic databases that monitor dispensed prescriptions for controlled substances in 49 states and the District of Columbia. Idaho's Medicaid staff has access to the PDMP and uses it to identify at-risk beneficiaries and to monitor cash transactions. The chart below compares the Idaho FFS Medicaid program's access to the PDMP with that of other programs.

|   | No access to the PDMP | Access to the PDMP |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Number of responding programs (%) n = 38</b> | 22 (58%)              | 16 (42%)           |
| <b>Idaho's PRR</b>                              |                       | ✓                  |

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