



PROVIDER *bulletin*

June 18, 2021

Dear Provider:

DHCS wishes the managed care plans to share the following with the network providers. Below are the links to the articles. To view previous Educational Articles please go to the DHCS website at <http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/edarticles.aspx>.

Learning Objectives:

- Explain why long-term use of benzodiazepines should be limited.
- Describe clinical circumstances when tapering benzodiazepines should be considered.
- Identify clinical and patient-specific factors to consider when designing a benzodiazepine taper.
- Recognize signs of withdrawal and when to slow down a benzodiazepine taper.

Key Points:

- Overprescribing of benzodiazepines and co-prescribing benzodiazepines with opioids may lead to serious side effects, including death.
- Limit use of benzodiazepines to the shortest possible duration and utilize gradual discontinuation (tapering) to minimize the risk of withdrawal symptoms.
- Regularly assess the need for benzodiazepine use in patients who take these medications and discuss strategies for discontinuation when the risks outweigh the benefits.
- Consider alternative treatments if benzodiazepines are needed long-term.

Follow the link below to access the complete DHCS FFS Education Article concerning recommendations for the Tapering of Benzodiazepines.

https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured_31028.pdf

Sincerely,

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