

To: AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Providers

Date: July 2, 2020

Subject: Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Screening and Pharmaceutical Treatment Initiative

Summary: Update to providers regarding new CDC recommendations for HCV screening and authorization requirements for Eplclusa®.

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is the most common blood-borne disease and the leading cause for liver transplant in the United States (LDH, 2019a). HCV prevalence in Louisiana is estimated at 1.6% to 1.8%, with higher rates among urban residents, men and women aged 45-54 years, with highest rates among males in all age groups and among African American males aged 45-54 years (LA OPH, 2015).

Louisiana ranks fifth in the U.S. for HCV/HIV co-infection; an estimated 6% of individuals with HCV in Louisiana are co-infected with HIV, and 18% of individuals with HIV as a result of intravenous drug use are also diagnosed with HCV co-infection (LA OPH, 2015).

New CDC Recommendations

As of **April 2020**, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now recommends universal hepatitis C screening at least once in a lifetime for **all adults aged 18 and older**, as well as screening all pregnant women during each pregnancy.

In addition, the CDC recommends:

- A **one-time hepatitis C testing**, regardless of age, for people with **recognized conditions or exposures**. (For a complete list of these recognized conditions or exposures, please refer to the [CDC's ABCs for Health Professionals.](#))
- **Routine periodic testing** for people with ongoing risk factors **and** any person who requests Hepatitis C testing.

Click to view the CDC's [recommended testing sequence for identifying current hepatitis c virus infection](#) and also the [recommended interpretation of test results and further actions](#).

Epclusa®

As of summer 2019, Healthy Louisiana enrollees have access to safe and effective treatment for hepatitis C. The authorized generic (AG) to which they have access is Epclusa®, which has proven effective in curing 95% of persons living with HCV (LDH, 2019a). Epclusa® is the preferred direct-acting antiviral (DAA) and **does not require prior authorization** unlike other available treatment regimens (LA Medicaid, 2019).

For more information regarding Epclusa®, please view the [Epclusa prescribing information](#) here.

Questions:

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the care of our members. If you have questions about this communication, please contact AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's Provider Services department at 1-888-922-0007 or your [Provider Network Management Account Executive](#).

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Where can I find more information on COVID-19?

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana has updated its website to streamline communications and important notifications about COVID-19. Please visit <http://amerihealthcaritasla.com/covid-19> for update-to-date information for both providers and members, including frequently asked questions, cancellations and postponements, and important provider alerts from AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana and the Louisiana Department of Health.

Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). Hepatitis C. <http://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/1012> [4 November 2019a].

Louisiana Medicaid. Authorization Criteria for Hepatitis C DAA Agents for Medicaid July 2019.

Louisiana Office of Public Health (LA OPH). Epidemiologic Profile of Hepatitis C Virus Infection in Louisiana – 2015.