



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

DEPARTMENT: Pharmacy	REFERENCE NUMBER: GA.PHAR.26
EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/2019	POLICY NAME: Pharmacy Lock-In Program (Ambetter)
REVIEWED/REVISED DATE: 10/2019, 4/2020, 4/2021, 10/2021	RETIRED DATE: N/A
PRODUCT TYPE: HIM	PAGE: 1 of 5

SCOPE:

Ambetter from Peach State Health Plan Medical Management and Pharmacy Departments, Compliance.

PURPOSE:

Ambetter from Peach State Health Plan has a comprehensive Pharmacy Lock-In Program. The Pharmacy Lock-In Program detects and prevents abuse of the pharmacy benefit, as defined by specific criteria, by restricting members to one specific pharmacy and controlled substance provider (if one is chosen) for a defined period of time.

POLICY:

To monitor and control suspected abuse of the pharmacy benefit by Peach State HIM members, as identified and confirmed through analysis and monitoring by the Pharmacy Department, by restricting the members to only one specific pharmacy and controlled substance provider (if one is chosen) for a defined period of time.

PROCEDURE:

Pharmacy claims will be audited on a monthly basis using selected criteria from the list below to identify potential misuse of the prescription benefit.

- Prescriptions written on a stolen, forged or altered prescription blank issued by a licensed prescriber;
- Prescribed medications do not correlate with the Member’s medical condition, as identified by his/her PCP, or ICD-10 code from encounter data;
- Member has filled prescriptions at more than two pharmacies per month or more than five pharmacies per year;
- Member receives more than five therapeutic agents per month;
- Member receives more than three Controlled Substances per month;
- Member receives duplicative therapy from different prescribers;
- Member receives prescriptions from more than two prescribers per month;
- Member has been seen in Hospital Emergency Room more than two times per year;
- Member has diagnosis of narcotic poisoning or drug abuse on file;
- Number of prescriptions for controlled substances exceeds 10 % of total number of prescriptions;
- Referrals from providers reporting suspected abuse



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Once audits have been performed, and members identified and confirmed to have abused the pharmacy benefit, the following process shall occur:

1. Ambetter from Peach State’s Pharmacy staff will research cases of potential abuse to validate if inappropriate use of the pharmacy benefit has occurred or is occurring.
2. When a case of inappropriate use is documented, the Pharmacy staff presents the details of the case to the Pharmacy and/or Medical Directors. A decision is then made to determine if member lock-in to a pharmacy and provider is warranted. While in lock-in status, the member will be restricted to one pharmacy to obtain their prescriptions; other pharmacies will not be paid if they fill prescriptions for the member. If the member is also locked into one provider, only controlled substances prescribed by the designated provider will be reimbursed.
3. If the case is designated inappropriate use, the member will be assigned to a new pharmacy to which the filling of prescriptions will be restricted. If necessary, the member will also be restricted to one provider for controlled substances prescribing. Pharmacy Services sends a letter summarizing the decision to the member, with a copy sent to the designated pharmacy, the primary care provider (PCP) and/or other prescribers. If the member wishes to appeal the decision to be placed in lock-in or to designate an alternate pharmacy or prescribing provider, they may submit that request to the Peach State Appeals and Grievances Department. The initial request may be made orally, but must be followed within 30 calendar days of the effective date on the lock-in letter by a written request for administrative review. The request must be sent to the following address:

Address: Ambetter from Peach State Health Plan
 Appeals and Grievance Coordinator
 1100 Circle 75 Parkway
 Suite 1100
 Atlanta, GA 30339



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4. Upon designation of the pharmacy and prescribing provider for lock-in, Peach State’s Director of Pharmacy coordinates the changes to the contracted Pharmacy Benefits Management Company to initiate the lock-in.
5. The member will be permitted to change pharmacies for good cause, after discussion with the provider(s) and the pharmacist. Valid reasons include if a change of address which places the member at a great distance from the designated pharmacy, if the lock-in pharmacy requests that the member be removed from that pharmacy, or if the pharmacy does not provide the prescribed drug. The member will be permitted to change prescribing providers for controlled substances if deemed medically necessary or if the provider refuses to see the patient.
6. If at any time the pharmacy is out of stock of a member’s medication, specifically a controlled substance, the member must have their physician work with the pharmacy to prescribe an alternative medication that the pharmacy does have in stock.
7. Case management and education reinforcement of appropriate medication/pharmacy use shall be provided by Peach State to “lock-in” members.
8. All “lock-in” members will be reviewed periodically (at least every year from the original lock-in effective date) for program adherence and prescription utilization.
9. Prescriptions, within the limits of the Plan formulary, from all participating prescribers shall be honored and may not be required to be written by the PCP only, unless the member has been restricted to one prescriber for controlled substances.
10. Each member is given the opportunity to dispute the Lock-In determination by submitting an appeal to Peach State Health Plan Appeals and Grievance Department.
11. Provision shall be made for the member to obtain an emergency supply of medication at pharmacies other than the designated lock-in pharmacy to assure the provision of necessary medication required in an emergency (e.g. when the



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designated pharmacy is closed, the member cannot readily access the pharmacy, or the pharmacy does not have the required medication in inventory). Such overrides will be specific for the member’s situation; customizable per the pharmacy coordinators discretion.

12. Upon annual review, if the member is compliant in the program the member will be notified that the lock-in is being removed and the member is free to access any Peach State network pharmacy or provider.

REFERENCES:

ATTACHMENTS:

DEFINITIONS:

REVISION LOG



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REVISION	DATE
Updated formatting/style of header to be consistent with previous corporate formatting. Updated verbiage from Peach State to Ambetter from Peach State. Updated lock-in release section to only require notification to member.	4/2020
Annual review. Add Ambetter from PSHP Logo. Removed any direct verbiage of roles handled directly by pharmacy department for more generalization to be consistent with changes to Medicaid Lock-in policy. Changed verbiage of quarterly lock-in assessment review to annual review to be consistent with Medicaid Lock-in policy.	4/2021
4Q 2021 annual review. No changes made.	10/2021