

# Client Update

November 2, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

People are understandably weary as the pandemic continues, but now is not the time to let our guard down. Winter brings indoor gatherings, holidays and seasonal flu – all of which challenge us to take precautions to protect our health during normal winter months and especially during the pandemic.

Getting a flu shot will not protect against COVID-19, but it is still one of the essential steps you and your plan members can take to stay healthy during the months ahead. Together with wearing a mask, social distancing and avoiding large gatherings, a flu shot will not only help all of us avoid many strains of seasonal flu, but also preserve our essential healthcare resources for patients suffering the effects of COVID-19.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu vaccination during 2018-2019 prevented an estimated:

- 4.4 million influenza illnesses
- 2.3 million influenza-associated medical visits
- 58,000 influenza-associated hospitalizations
- 3,500 influenza-associated deaths

At WellDyne, we practice what we preach. With nearly 80% of our employees working from home, we are encouraging those enrolled in our health plan to get their no-cost flu shot from any network provider, pharmacy or clinic located in their area. We have also provided free flu shots to our employees during drive-through clinics in our parking lots. It does not get any easier than that!

Your WellDyne team continues to take every precaution to protect our workers and uphold our commitments to you, our valued clients. Our COVID task force continually monitors all aspects of the pandemic and is dedicated to taking responsible precautions while keeping you informed every step of the way. We are all in this together and together, we can make a difference.

# COVID-19

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# Client Update

August 4, 2020

## **Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory**

As our country adapts and responds to the latest information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, WellDyne continues to follow CDC guidelines, and the procedures and approaches we implemented earlier this year. The steps we have taken to minimize the impact to our company have proven effective as we support ongoing service to clients and members, protect our employees and maintain high standards of quality, accuracy and timeliness for our mail order and specialty pharmacies.

The actions we have taken include:

- 80% of our employees working remotely
- Social distancing guidelines strictly enforced within our facilities
- Specific requirements regarding the wearing of masks within our facilities
- Policies regarding temperature checks
- Guidelines for on-site employees to report any exposure to or symptoms of the virus

Our internal task force continues to meet regularly as we monitor the status of the outbreak across the country. As the situation unfolds, we will communicate any changes so that you will be aware of our proactive steps and future plans. As always, our goal is to continue to protect our front-line workers and meet our commitments to our clients and plan members.

We appreciate your support and understanding during these unprecedented times as our country works through the various stages of the pandemic, and we will determine the appropriate response as the situation changes. Please contact your Client Services liaison if you have any questions.



# Client Update

May 26, 2020

## **Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory**

Across the country, the economy is beginning to open up with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. As state guidelines continue to evolve, our focus remains on maintaining high service levels for our clients and the steady operation of our mail order and specialty pharmacies. At the same time, we are committed to supporting the health and well-being of our employees in Florida, Colorado and other locations.

At all stages of the pandemic, we have taken the necessary steps to protect our front-line workers and continue to uphold our commitments, with more than 80% of our employees working from home. As the status of reopening the economy unfolds, the WellDyne team will, for the most part, continue to work remotely so we may protect our front-line workers.

WellDyne has chartered a task force in charge of planning our return to the office setting and has been closely monitoring the situation. Although we are laying the groundwork for the eventual transition back to the office, we have not set a specific transition date and this move is not planned for the near future.

We strongly feel that moving slowly and deliberately is the best course of action. Of course, we will continue to evaluate our plans to best serve clients and meet the support needs of plan members. We will keep you informed as we move forward so that you will be aware of our proactive steps and future plans for the transition back to the office.

As always, we appreciate your support and understanding as we work through the various stages of the pandemic. If you have any questions, please contact your Client Services liaison.



# Client Update

May 4, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

As we monitor the impact of the COVID-19 national crisis, we continually evaluate our policies and procedures to best serve our clients and meet the clinical needs of members.

At the beginning of the crisis, potential drug access issues were causing significant concern and our goal was to ensure members had peace of mind as well as sufficient supply on hand of their maintenance medications. As a result, in March, we initiated a global override of our “refill-too-soon” edit to allow members to refill prescriptions earlier than normal.

**At this time, as we do not anticipate access to care or drug supply chain issues, and quarantines across the country are beginning to be modified, we have decided to reinstate the refill-too-soon edit for all clients effective May 6.** The refill-too-soon edit helps avoid medication stockpiling and ensures members are taking their medications as directed, with refills available when they are close to finishing their current supply.

As always, we will continue to closely monitor the drug supply chain and other circumstances related to the outbreak as the country moves forward through this situation. Should special circumstances dictate a need for a member’s early prescription refill, we have procedures in place to assess the situation and work with members on those requests.

If you would like to discuss this change or modify the refill too soon process for your plan, please contact your Client Services Liaison.

# Client Update

April 27, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

As the COVID-19 pandemic and our nation's response continues to evolve, our mail order and specialty pharmacies remain fully staffed – shipping prescriptions to plan members and consistently meeting our service standards. Throughout this unprecedented time, our pharmacy teams have remained focused on our clients and their members, adapting as necessary to continue to uphold our commitments. They have been doing an amazing job! Our pharmacy teams:

- Have been equipped with personal protective equipment.
- Wear their protective gear when they are in our building.
- Monitor and adhere to changing national and state guidelines.

We are so appreciative of the work our teams are doing – essential personnel working in our facilities enjoy a catered lunch every day to recognize their contributions during this extraordinary time.

While the pandemic has shifted some of our day-to-day approaches, our drug supply has remained steady and constant. We have been carefully monitoring our resources since the outbreak unfolded, working hard to ensure access to therapies for patients. Although it is a fluid situation, at this time, we do not anticipate drug supply shortages.

Hydroxychloroquine, in particular, has returned to normal volume. During the nation's interest in the drug as a potential COVID-19 treatment, we experienced a three-fold increase in volume, peaking during the week of March 15. As more data emerged, interest in hydroxychloroquine steadily diminished. Our supply of hydroxychloroquine is strong and we continue to meet the needs of members who rely on it for conditions such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

The WellDyne team, for the most part, continues to work from home. While our work-from-home employees have the equipment and technology they need, many do have children at home due to school and daycare closings. These dedicated professionals are proud to be able to continue to serve you during this time and we ask for your understanding around any background noise involving children, pets or electronic entertainment systems. We do our best to keep background sounds to a minimum in order to fully concentrate on the caller's needs.

- Overall, we are meeting our service standards and are grateful to receive much positive feedback from our callers.
- As a reminder, many questions that come to Member Services can also be handled via the Member Portal.

You can count on WellDyne to adjust to the changing landscape of the COVID-19 outbreak as we move through the stages of this pandemic together. If you have any questions, please contact your Client Services liaison.

## Client Update

April 14, 2020

### Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

WellDyne continues to build on actions previously taken to manage and protect drug supply during these volatile times. Although we continuously monitor our drug supply and the global manufacturing environment in order to mitigate potential drug shortages, ongoing supply of certain drugs is at risk as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

In particular, we anticipate hydroxychloroquine (Plaquenil) – typically prescribed to treat lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and malaria – will soon be in short supply. Once this drug was singled out as having potential benefit for COVID-19 patients, the increased attention and demand have put unprecedented demands on the global supply. Decreased ability to obtain hydroxychloroquine from manufacturers in India has also lessened U.S. supply, as the Indian government has taken steps to retain the medication for its citizens.

Drug shortages periodically occur in the pharmacy industry for various reasons. Our existing process for addressing a drug shortage and discouraging stockpiling includes:

- New-fill limits that follow guidance and industry best practices, (in the case of hydroxychloroquine, limiting new fills to a 14-day supply).
- Temporary suspension of any 90-day fills with refills limited to a 30-day supply, as is the case with hydroxychloroquine.
- Proactively working our wholesaler relationships to access drug inventory from various sources.

We have identified the patients that receive this medication from WellDyne and will work closely with these patients and their prescribers to support their ongoing treatment. As necessary, the following steps may be taken if a global shortage is imminent:

- Prescriber outreach to explore alternative therapies for patients.
- Transferring prescriptions to retail network pharmacies with access to drug supply.

Although hydroxychloroquine is available at present, please be aware the situation is fluid and could change. As always, we are dedicated to supporting our clients and members who depend on us to help navigate the COVID-19 outbreak. Watch for further updates on this topic as we take the necessary steps on behalf of our members with chronic conditions who depend on this drug.



# Client Update

April 3, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

Hydroxychloroquine continues to be in the national news – and also in short supply. Mentioned as having potential benefit for severely ill COVID-19 patients, the demand for this medication has increased dramatically over the past several weeks, resulting in a global shortage. At present, drug manufacturers have not been able to meet the increased demand.

Many existing patients currently rely on this medication, since it is essential to the treatment of lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and malaria. To help maintain an adequate supply of hydroxychloroquine to meet the needs of existing patients, WellDyne is taking the following actions:

- We are no longer providing 90-day fills of hydroxychloroquine.
- Refills are now limited to a maximum 30-day supply.
- New, first-time fills are limited to a maximum 14-day supply.

With concerns regarding adequate availability of this drug, we join other pharmacy benefit managers in taking actions to avoid gaps in care. As always, we continue to closely monitor the drug supply chain and are maintaining high service levels to meet current and future member needs during this unprecedented time.

If you have questions, please reach out to your Client Services Liaison.

*Note: Decisions regarding pharmacy benefits and coverage limits may vary for some plans.*

## Client Update

March 27, 2020

### **Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory**

As the COVID-19 national health crisis puts unexpected strains on the healthcare system, WellDyne is closely monitoring the pharmaceutical manufacturer supply chain to detect potential shortages for drugs that we dispense.

One product receiving national attention, hydroxychloroquine, is currently used to treat lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and malaria. At this time, WellDyne has an adequate supply of hydroxychloroquine on hand and we are taking steps to maintain our stock. However, if the U.S. government directs drug manufacturers to ship and stock their medications to government-defined destinations, disruptions in our supply chain may impact hydroxychloroquine and other drugs that are potentially useful in treating COVID-19.

As with any potential interruption to drug availability, such as drug recalls, we have steps in place to move toward appropriate treatment alternatives to help members stay adherent. To help provide access to medications during the COVID-19 public health crisis, we have taken the following steps:

- Allow 30-day retail fills of medications that may become in short supply, such as hydroxychloroquine, to preserve our supply for patients on therapy for a chronic condition.
- Enable our national priority refill process to allow members to refill medications earlier than normally allowed.

To best serve our clients and members, our senior operations team meets daily to review drug supply chain updates, prescribing patterns and other related guidance. As part of that detailed review, our clinical team evaluates the unfolding situation and latest guidance in order to recommend any treatment alternatives or protocol changes to consider during the outbreak. While we are not currently experiencing supply chain disruptions related to COVID-19, we will be flexible and proactive to address any future needs that may occur.

# Client Update

March 23, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

WellDyne is closely monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak and making appropriate operational adjustments to ensure adequate drug supply and high levels of service for our customers.

### High Service Levels

We now have more than 80% of our staff working from home, which helps lower the risk of virus exposure in our physical locations.

- We have maintained our high service levels in the pharmacy and contact center during the transition of many of our team members to work from home status.
- We are closely monitoring key metrics such as average speed of answer, call abandonment, shipping turnaround time and are pleased to report we are promptly serving your members.
- Today's extraordinary circumstances call for increased compassion and understanding. Plan members needing assistance have reached out to thank the WellDyne team for not only quick answers to their questions, but for the caring attitudes of our representatives. We appreciate this feedback and are sharing it with the team members on our front lines.

### Home Delivery Options

Keeping an appropriate supply of medication on hand without venturing into public places is a concern that many members of the public face right now.

- You may have heard that retail pharmacies such as CVS and Walgreens are offering local delivery to patients' homes, which we support during this national emergency.
- Our WellDyne mail order pharmacy is an excellent solution for plan members, whether their needs are for routine, maintenance prescriptions or specialty drugs.
- With free standard shipping, members can receive the medications they need without leaving their homes. Most members also save money on the cost of their prescriptions when using home delivery.

### Medication Access

We are continually monitoring prescription drug usage and drug supply, and at this time do not anticipate potential shortages of medications.

- As a reminder, we have activated our national priority refill process which allows members to refill medications earlier than normally allowed.
- While no products are currently approved for the treatment of COVID-19, we have no prior authorization requirements for medications that may be prescribed in an effort to treat or prevent the virus.



The WellDyne leadership team meets daily to discuss our response to the COVID-19 outbreak and related issues. You can count on us for regular updates in the days ahead regarding the steps we are taking on your behalf. Although we are living in unprecedented times, our team continues to lean in to anticipate and overcome any challenges, to best support you and help “flatten the curve.” Our thoughts go out to everyone affected by this crisis.

# Client Update

March 17, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

WellDyne is taking steps to fight the spread of COVID-19, to ensure a healthy workforce and provide uninterrupted service to our clients and members. Our senior operations team is leading our Coronavirus Command Center and chairing our daily leadership meetings to ensure we are proactively planning next steps in a rapidly changing environment. We are committed to providing regular updates when there is new information to share with you. Please note – a clarification regarding our prior authorization process is included at the end of this update.

Effective immediately, to limit the potential exposure of our facilities to the coronavirus, any employee in a position who can work from home is now working from home. We have provided our work-from-home employees with the equipment, support and security to successfully manage their responsibilities from their remote locations. This allows us to decrease the number of employees in the building by nearly 75%, reducing the risk to our critical workforce and ensuring we can continue to ship prescriptions to patients. We have been able to increase social distancing for the staff within the building and this approach makes it easier to perform enhanced cleaning and disinfecting throughout our company.

Like many communities across the country, local school and daycare closings have affected our employees and their families. Colleagues who are now working from home to ensure availability to take service calls may have small children at home. As a result, when you or your members speak with Member Services or Client Services, a child or TV may occasionally be heard in the background. We will make every effort to minimize disruption of calls, and appreciate your understanding and support during these unprecedented times.

Our management systems enable remote monitoring of call times and service levels to help ensure we can maintain a high level of service. Detailed reporting capabilities allow us to monitor when a medication override is granted and other key indicators so that we can provide this information to you. Our goal is to anticipate challenges and conduct anticipatory analysis in order to stay in front of any unexpected changes in normal operations. At this time, we do not anticipate delays in dispensing any medications, including those related to COVID-19, and we continue to watch the use of anti-viral products.

With a multi-pronged approach, our leaders are closely collaborating with national and regional resources to prepare for and anticipate changes related to containment of COVID-19. We recognize that anxiety is understandably high as we move forward into unique and unsettling circumstances. The CDC is your best source for the latest COVID-19 updates. Visit the [CDC coronavirus website](#).

We will keep you informed of new decisions and developments as they occur.

### Prior Authorization Update / Clarification

At this time, there are no specific drugs approved to treat or prevent COVID-19. Some physicians are trying anti-virals, which are not included on the WellDyne Prior Authorization list. Our previous statement on this topic was intended to reassure clients that our prior authorization list aligns with today's urgent situation.

# Client Update

March 13, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Coronavirus (COVID-19) Client Advisory

Your WellDyne team is closely monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak and is committed to the health and safety of our clients, plan members and colleagues. In response to the national public health emergency, we want to share the actions we are taking to support clients and members.

### Drug Supply

We are working closely with our wholesale partners to monitor and maintain an adequate drug supply. Our drug purchasing strategies ensure we have an adequate supply today and into the future to take care of our patients. At this point, we do not anticipate shortages for medications we dispense and we will continue to closely monitor supply to avoid any service disruption to our patient population.

### Access to Treatment

To ensure timely access to medications, we are making changes in our Refill Too Soon and Prior Authorization programs. The changes described below are temporary, in direct response to the national public health emergency posed by the COVID-19 virus. To best serve our clients and members, we are taking the following steps:

- **Waive prescription refill limits (refill too soon).** We have activated our national refill override process which allows members to refill medications earlier than normally allowed. This process applies to our mail order pharmacy and all retail pharmacies to help ensure access to medications.
  - This override automatically occurs once a pharmacist transacts the claim. There is no need for a member or physician to call Member Services and request an override.
  - This override went into effect Friday March 13th. Any client wanting to maintain the refill-too-soon edit for their plan needs to notify their Client Services Liaison.
- **Manage prior authorization (PA) requirements on select drugs.** There are no PA requirements for drugs that may be used to treat or prevent COVID-19. PA requirements for other classes of drugs remain in place.

### Emergency Preparedness

Contingency planning is part of our normal operational approach to ensure we are prepared to address unique circumstances that may arise and determine any additional actions needed.

- WellDyne maintains redundant operational facilities in Lakeland, FL and Centennial, CO to help us ensure a high level of service to our clients and members during any unexpected situations.
- The steps we have outlined today are consistent with the recommendations issued by state and federal regulators, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and/or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and follow best practices implemented by others in the industry.



- Across company locations, we are taking precautions to ensure that our workforce is protected and available to take care of our clients and their members. We have implemented work-from-home programs, performed staff education and deployed enhanced cleaning measures in our facilities.

We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 outbreak as it unfolds, taking appropriate steps for our WellDyne clients, plan members and colleagues. We will communicate any additional program changes as they occur.

To access the most current updates and guidance on the virus, please visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). If you have questions for us, please contact your Client Services Liaison.

*3/17/20 – Updated for clarity: Prior authorization information*

# Client Update

March 3, 2020

## Subject: WellDyne Response to coronavirus (COVID-19)

The health and safety of our clients, plan members and colleagues are top priorities at WellDyne. We want you to know that we are closely monitoring the coronavirus outbreak and are prepared to support you and your members. To access the most current updates and guidance on the virus, please visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

As you know, WellDyne maintains redundant operational facilities in Lakeland, FL and Centennial, CO. These redundancies ensure a high level of service to our clients and members in any unexpected situations. In addition, we are constantly assessing the COVID-19 outbreak as it unfolds and taking appropriate steps, including:

- Prior authorization will be required on all new starts of HIV and other designated medications, to monitor pharmacovigilance and help ensure and maintain product availability for the HIV population. This ensures that individuals currently taking HIV medications can remain adherent to their treatment regimens.
- Refill criteria will be adjusted to allow members to obtain and maintain a 30-day supply of maintenance medications. This supports members as they follow any community recommendations to isolate themselves to reduce the spread of the disease.
- Drug supply will be maintained due to our multiple supply chain avenues and wholesale partnerships. In the case of shortages that cannot be mitigated through our extensive network of access, we will support the patient and provide communications to you as our client on alternative, non-formulary products where available.
- A flexible pharmacy service model ensures delivery of medication to patients in any location. Additionally, a strong network of retail pharmacy locations can be leveraged if necessary for patient convenience and access to required medications.

Please be sure to share the CDC's recommendations with your employees and implement appropriate strategies within your work environments, as WellDyne is doing over the coming weeks. Routine use of these measures by individuals, their families and employers will increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak.

As we mentioned, the CDC's website provides extensive details on the background, identification and ongoing research regarding COVID-19, including the search for a vaccine. If you have any questions for us, please contact your account manager.