



HEALTH PLAN OF NEVADA  
A UnitedHealthcare Company



SIERRA HEALTH AND LIFE  
A UnitedHealthcare Company

**Date:** March 1, 2018

**To:** HPN/SHL Contracted Providers

**From:** Ryan Bitton, PharmD, MBA  
Senior Director, Pharmacy

**Subject:** NEW TO THERAPY OPIOID EDITS – HPN/SHL COMMERCIAL & HPN  
MEDICAID PLANS

---

Due to concerns regarding the potential for opioid abuse, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new recommendations in March 2016 around prescribing opioids. To align with the CDC's recommendations, we're implementing changes to our short-acting opioid product supply limits for acute pain, effective March 1, 2018.

### **What's Changing**

On March 1, 2018 HPN/SHL Commercial & Medicaid plans will implement a short-acting opioid supply limit of 7-days and less than 50 Morphine Equivalent Dose (MED) per day for patients new to opioid therapy. Requests for opioids beyond these limits will require prior authorization.

### **How This Affects You and Your Patients**

Long-term opioid use can begin with the treatment of an acute condition. For this reason, we're asking you to prescribe the following:

- The lowest effective dose of an immediate-release opioid
- The minimum quantity of an opioid needed for severe, acute pain that requires an opioid

By adhering to these guidelines, you'll be working to help minimize unnecessary, prolonged opioid use.

In addition, HPN/SHL opioid-prescribing providers should have received a letter notifying them of this change.

Please call HPN/SHL Pharmacy Services at 702-242-7050 with any questions.