Medication Process
Quick Reference Guide – All Regions

Key Points:

- Under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Community Care programs, providers may prescribe medications to Veterans in various ways, depending on the reason and urgency.
- All medications must be prescribed in accordance with the VA National Formulary, and medications prescribed during an urgent care or retail location visit must be prescribed in accordance with the VA Urgent Care Formulary. If the urgent medication is not listed, the provider may use the VA National Formulary.
- Always fax both the authorization and prescription to the authorizing VA Medical Center (VAMC) for routine medication prescribed during a pre-authorized visit. If the Veteran prefers to take his or her prescription to the pharmacy, he or she will also need to bring the authorization.
- As per U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) policies, some controlled substances will require the Veteran bring a hard copy of the prescription to the overseeing VAMC.

To ensure Veterans do not incur medication costs, please review the information below.

Medication Prescribed During Pre-Authorized Visits

If a Veteran attends a pre-authorized appointment at a provider’s office, VA allows the provider to write a prescription for the Veteran. In these cases, VA is primarily responsible for fulfilling and supplying Veterans with medications. Providers should follow the rules of the VA National Formulary and adhere to the general process below:

- Medications may be filled in-person at a VA Pharmacy.
- Community providers should always fax both the authorization and prescription to the authorizing VA Medical Center (VAMC). If the Veteran prefers to take his or her prescription to the VA Pharmacy, he or she will also need to bring a copy of the community care authorization.
- If the Veteran needs a medication that’s not on VA’s National Formulary, the provider should:
  - Contact the local VAMC and request assistance with that VAMC’s non-formulary request process.
  - Fill out the VAMC’s form and return it.

View a map of VA Community Care Regions
If Medication is Needed Immediately

If a Veteran needs medication fulfilled immediately after a pre-authorized or emergency room visit and cannot wait for, or travel to, a VA Pharmacy, providers should follow this process below:

- Write a prescription for a 14-day supply without refills.
- The Veteran may fulfill the 14-day supply of medication at any local pharmacy and pay out-of-pocket, then contact the VAMC for reimbursement.
- If additional medication is needed after the 14-day supply, write a second prescription to be filled at a VA Pharmacy.
- If the prescription is for a non-formulary drug, the provider may write an initial 14-day supply. However, if the medication needs to be continued, the provider needs to contact its local VAMC and fill out a Formulary Request Review Form, as outlined above. The use of the 14-day supply of a non-formulary medication will not affect the likelihood of approval of a non-formulary request.

Medication Prescribed During Urgent Care/Retail Location Visits

Under the new Urgent Care/Retail Location benefit as a part of the VA MISSION Act, network urgent care or retail clinics may treat eligible Veterans without a prior authorization. In these cases, urgent care or retail clinics may prescribe medication under the following conditions:

- The prescription is no more than a 14-day supply without refills.
- If prescribing opiates, the prescription is no more than a seven-day supply and adheres to state law.
- All medications must be prescribed in accordance with the VA Urgent Care Formulary. If the medication is not listed, the provider may use the VA National Formulary.
- Veterans may fulfill the medication at any Express Scripts network pharmacy without having to pay out-of-pocket. Express Scripts network pharmacies can be found here: www.vaurgentcarelocator.triwest.com.

**NOTE:** Urgent care and retail location clinics must be in-network with TriWest in order to accept Veterans under this benefit. Pharmacies must be in-network with Express Scripts to dispense medications under this benefit. For more on the Urgent Care benefit, please review the Emergency and Urgent Care Quick Reference Guide.