

Pharmacy/Medication Process

Quick Reference Guide

Key Points:

- ➔ Under the Community Care Network (CCN), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will cover medically necessary medication that's part of an authorized episode of care and follows the rules of the [VA National Formulary](#).
 - ➔ Urgent or emergent medication must be on the [Urgent/Emergent Formulary](#).
 - ➔ If the Veteran needs a medication that's not on VA's National Formulary, the provider needs to contact the Veteran's authorizing VAMC, request a Formulary Request Review Form, fill out the form, and submit it back to the VAMC for approval or denial.
- ➔ For all medications, including urgent and emergent, TriWest uses the Express Scripts (ESI) pharmacy network.
- ➔ Urgent and emergent medications do NOT require an approved referral/authorization.
 - ➔ Clinic staff must FIRST call TriWest at 833-4VETNOW (833-483-8669) to confirm Veteran eligibility; this will activate the pharmacy benefit in order for the medication to be approved for fulfillment.
- ➔ For general prescriptions, always fax **both the approved referral/ authorization and prescription** to the authorizing VA Medical Center (VAMC). If the Veteran prefers to take his or her prescription to the pharmacy, he or she will also need to bring the approved referral/authorization.
- ➔ Real-time pharmacy dispensing will be on available on the Availity Portal in the TriWest Payer Space for CCN.
- ➔ As per U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) policies, providers are encouraged to obtain a waiver directly from the state to write for controlled substances. Some controlled substances will require the Veteran bring a hard copy of the prescription to the overseeing VA medical facility.

General Prescriptions

VA handles all routine medication fulfillments directly. To prescribe routine, non-urgent/non-emergent medicine:

- ➔ Prescribe the medicine in accordance with VA's National Formulary.
- ➔ Fax both the prescription and a copy of the approved referral/authorization to your local VA Pharmacy for processing and fulfillment **within one hour of seeing the Veteran**.

- The Veteran may pick up the medicine at the VA Pharmacy, an ESI pharmacy, or have it mailed through VA pharmacies.
- You may NOT dispense medication samples to Veterans.
- You must be registered with your state's prescription monitoring program.

If the Veteran needs a medication that's NOT on VA's National Formulary, you will need to take a few additional steps before prescribing:

- Contact your local VAMC and ask for a Formulary Request Review Form. Fill out the form and return it to the VAMC.
- VA will either approve or deny your request.
- If approved, continue prescribing the medication as described above.

What to Include in General Prescriptions

VA requires that prescribing providers under CCN include the following information for each routine/maintenance prescription for fulfillment:

1. Provider Name (Family, Given, Middle Suffix) Provider Name Suffix (e.g., Sr., Jr., II., III.)
2. National Provider Identifier (NPI) of the Provider
3. Tax ID Number (TIN) of the Provider
4. Provider's **personal** DEA Number and expiration date (not a generic facility number)
5. Provider's office address
6. Providers office phone and additional phone number
7. Provider's fax number (if applicable)
8. Provider's discipline (e.g., physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner)

Urgent/Emergent Medicine

- When there is an urgent/emergent need to start a medication and it is not possible to fill the prescription at a VA Pharmacy, the provider may write a script for up to a maximum 14-day supply (without refills) or a maximum of 7-day supply for controlled substances.
- Send the prescription and a copy of your approved referral/authorization to an ESI retail pharmacy, preferably through the Surescripts e-Prescribing tool. To learn more about Surescripts and to register, go to <http://surescripts.com>.
- When it is medically necessary to continue the medicine beyond the initial 14-day supply, write a second prescription and fax it to the VA's authorizing facility pharmacy **within one hour of seeing the Veteran**.
 - Community providers can now utilize e-prescribing to push prescriptions to a VA Pharmacy, which is VA's preferred method. VA's next preferred method is via fax.
- CCN providers must check with their state's prescription monitoring program for any controlled substance utilization prior to writing any controlled substance prescription for a Veteran to ensure appropriate opioid/controlled substance use.

Veterans who consent to participate in Human Subject Research studies and are enrolled in clinical trials **CANNOT** be authorized for those services under the CCN. Veterans must be referred back to their respective Non-VA Care Office for the administration and coordination of non-VA care associated with clinical trials.

Flu Shots

	Authorized Medical Care	Urgent Care
CCN Region 4	Veterans may receive a flu shot as part of an authorized care visit with an in-network provider. All authorized care visits require an approved authorization/referral.	Eligible Veterans may get their annual flu shot at a retail network pharmacy, urgent care or walk-in visit for the sole purpose of receiving a flu shot
CCN Region 5 Start of Healthcare Delivery Following Flu Season (4/1/2021 – 9/30/2021)	Veterans may receive a flu shot as part of an authorized care visit with an in-network provider. All authorized care visits require an approved authorization/referral.	Eligible Veterans may receive a flu vaccination at an Urgent Care visit without an underlying condition

Region 5 – Alaska Providers

Laws implemented on Jan. 1, 2021, now require online/electronic prescriptions for controlled substances. VA is developing an e-prescribing tool that will comply with state regulations and permit the prescription; it is anticipated to be available September 2021. Providers are encouraged to obtain a waiver directly from the state to write for controlled substances. Providers can contact the local VAMC if there are additional questions or concerns.

In addition to the online formulary, an online formulary search tool is available at: <http://www.pbm.va.gov/apps/VANationalFormulary/>. This application provides formulary alternatives to non-formulary drugs in the same VA drug class.