

South Carolina  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
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## MEDICAID BULLETIN

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**TO: Providers Indicated**

**SUBJECT: Tobacco Cessation Programs in South Carolina**

Recognizing that tobacco use is the single most *preventable* cause of premature death in the state, the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is reminding prescribers and pharmacists that Medicaid provides coverage for tobacco cessation products. Additionally, DHHS has partnered with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to communicate information regarding tobacco treatment services in South Carolina. Tobacco cessation programs are currently available in South Carolina; brief descriptions of several of these programs are outlined in this bulletin.

### **All South Carolina Residents**

The South Carolina Tobacco Quitline, **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669, toll-free)**, is **available to any South Carolina resident** and is not limited to Medicaid beneficiaries. The Quitline program is a free comprehensive tobacco treatment service that emphasizes a one-on-one counseling approach (using telephone and/or web-based counseling). Each caller is assigned to a personal Quit Coach who establishes a goal of working with the participant throughout the tobacco cessation process. This is an evidence-based program that has been clinically proven to help participants discontinue tobacco use for both the short and long term.

The nationally recognized leader in delivering validated tobacco treatment, Free & Clear®, operates the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline program. DHEC has developed an informational page (included with this Medicaid bulletin) that describes the Quitline program; copies of the information sheet may be made or downloaded from DHEC's website at [www.scdhec.gov/quitforkeeps](http://www.scdhec.gov/quitforkeeps). *DHHS strongly encourages prescribers and pharmacists to make this information available*

*to patients who are interested in discontinuing tobacco use.* Telephone services at the Quitline are available seven days a week between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight. Additional information about the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline, including instructions for ordering patient education and referral materials, is available at the DHEC website: [www.scdhec.gov/quitforkeeps](http://www.scdhec.gov/quitforkeeps).

**Medicaid Beneficiaries**

Two years ago, DHHS published a bulletin (dated September 21, 2004) that outlined Medicaid coverage policies for tobacco cessation products. DHHS acknowledges the importance of tobacco cessation; therefore, these coverage policies for Medicaid beneficiaries are being reiterated.

DHHS provides reimbursement for rebated tobacco cessation and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) products. A prescription written for a product listed in the chart below is covered within program limitations (e.g., monthly prescription limit) for all Medicaid fee-for-service beneficiaries, except for dual eligibles (individuals eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare). For dual eligibles, Medicaid provides coverage of rebated, over-the-counter (OTC) products for tobacco cessation. However, as with any Medicaid-covered OTC drug, a prescription for the specific OTC product must be authorized by the prescriber. A dual eligible's Medicare Part D prescription drug plan should provide coverage for legend (non-OTC) tobacco cessation products.

Prior authorization (PA) is not required (except where indicated in the chart) for reimbursement of the tobacco cessation products; however, there are quantity limitations for these pharmaceuticals as well as a coverage period limit. Medicaid coverage of tobacco cessation pharmaceuticals includes prescriptions authorized for any **one** of the following **rebated** products per beneficiary per calendar year:

No Prior Authorization Required	Prior Authorization Required*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Bupropion extended release products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ NRT lozenges, oral inhalers, nasal sprays: documentation of patient's inability to use the patches or gum; explanation of the medical necessity of the NRT lozenges, inhaler, or spray (versus patches or gum) is required.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ NRT patches, gum (legend or OTC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Varenicline (Chantix®): documentation of patient's intolerance to NRT products and bupropion is required.</li> </ul>
<p><b>* To request prior authorization, prescribers should contact First Health's Clinical Call Center at 866-247-1181 (toll-free).</b></p>	

Reimbursement for tobacco cessation products is available for a *single* twelve-week course of treatment consisting of 90 days (three consecutive months) per beneficiary per calendar year. Medicaid-covered maximum quantity limitations for tobacco cessation products are:

- 1) Bupropion extended release 150 mg - 180 tablets per 90-day period.
- 2) Nicotine patches - 90 patches per 90-day period.
- 3) Nicotine gum - 1,512 pieces per 90-day period.
- 4) Varenicline - 180 tablets per 90-day period.

Questions regarding this bulletin should be directed to the Department of Pharmacy Services at (803) 898-2876.

/s/

Robert M. Kerr  
Director

RMK/bgam

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