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## Priority Health 2011 Pharmacy Initiatives

### PHARMACY INITIATIVES AIM TO LOWER EMPLOYER HEALTH CARE COSTS

Priority Health is changing how health care is delivered by eliminating avoidable medical costs, producing better outcomes and creating better experiences for members. As part of Priority Health's plan for keeping health care affordable, they are implementing four pharmacy-management initiatives to help manage employer's per-capita health care costs. The first initiative is currently in process, a promotional campaign on the value of using generics to increase member participation. The next three listed on page two, will become effective April 1, 2011.

### FIRST INITIATIVE IS UNDERWAY

#### 1. Generic savings initiative waives first copayment to encourage switch.

Priority Health is sending letters to members who take select brand-name drugs to encourage them to save money by switching to generic equivalents. The letters detail projected savings and explain that generics are safe and effective. When members switch, their first copayment is waived.

The generic savings initiative covers three drug classes:

#### A. Angiotensin II Receptor Blockers (ARBs) — Used for controlling high blood pressure and treating heart failure. Brand-name ARBs include:

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| ▪ Hyzaar  | ▪ Micardis |
| ▪ Atacand | ▪ Diovan   |
| ▪ Teveten | ▪ Cozaar   |
| ▪ Avapro  | ▪ Benicar  |



**Savings: Members can save up to \$525 per year out-of-pocket by switching from brand-name ARBs to losartan (generic for Cozaar) and losartan/HCTZ (generic for Hyzaar).**

#### B. Triptans — Used to relieve migraines. Brand-name triptans include:

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|-----------|----------|
| ▪ Imitrex | ▪ Relpax |
| ▪ Maxalt  | ▪ Axert  |
| ▪ Amerge  | ▪ Frova  |
| ▪ Zomig   |          |



**Savings: Members can save up to \$2,800 per year out-of-pocket by switching from brand-name triptans to sumatriptan (generic for Imitrex) and naratriptan (generic for Amerge).**

#### C. Bisphosphonates — Commonly used for the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis (bone loss). Brand-name bisphosphonates include:

- |                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| ▪ Fosamax        | ▪ Didronel |
| ▪ Fosamax Plus D | ▪ Boniva   |
| ▪ Zometa         | ▪ Actonel  |



**Savings: Members can save up to \$960 per year out-of-pocket by switching from brand-name bisphosphonates to generic alendronate (generic for Fosamax).**

## **THREE INITIATIVES TO BEGIN APRIL 1, 2011**

- 1. Allergy medicines called non-sedating antihistamines (NSAs), which are readily available over the counter (OTC), will no longer be covered.**

With nearly all NSAs readily available at low cost OTC (in many instances less expensive than a copayment), no NSA will be covered — brand, generic or OTC. Brand-name NSAs include:

- Claritin (loratadine)
- Allegra (fexofenadine) and Allegra-D
- Zyrtec (cetirizine) and Zyrtec-D
- Xyzal
- Clarinex
- Claritin-D

**Please note:** Effective January 1, 2011, HSA and FSA members need a prescription in order to use their account funds for OTC allergy medicines.

- 2. Only generic and OTC versions of stomach medicines called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) will be covered.**

PPIs are used to combat stomach problems like heartburn and acid reflux. Brand-name PPIs cost 10 times more than generic and OTC PPIs. Head-to-head studies show that generic PPIs are just as effective as brand-name PPIs. In addition, *Consumer Reports* has named Prilosec OTC and Prevacid OTC as “Best Buy” PPIs.

Brand-name PPIs include:

- Aciphex
- Nexium
- Dexilant

Priority Health will continue to cover the following generic and OTC PPIs:

- Prilosec OTC (omeprazole)
- Prevacid OTC (lansoprazole)
- Pantoprazole

This initiative applies to both new and current members.

- 3. Contraceptive copayments will be aligned with plan documents.**

In the past, members were charged only one copayment per three-month supply of birth control medication. Effective April 1, copayments will be aligned with the correct copayment structure listed in plan documents:

Members pay one copayment per one-month supply at retail pharmacies (three copayments for a three-month supply). However, members can save on copayments by using Express Scripts home delivery.

This initiative applies to both new and current members.

## **QUESTIONS**

If you have questions concerning these initiatives, please contact Priority Health Member Services at **800.446.5674**. Otherwise, please contact your J.S. Clark Agency Account Manager.

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