



New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

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TO: Chief Sector Stewards

FROM: Sharon Smith, Health Benefits Specialist

DATE: September 3, 2008

RE: Empire Plan's Half Tablet Program

Effective October 1, 2008, the Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program will include a new component – the Half Tablet Program.

Under this program, copays can be reduced by using higher dosage tablets and splitting them in half. The program works as follows:

- Have your doctor write a new script for twice the dosage and half the quantity with directions to take $\frac{1}{2}$ of the tablet at the regularly scheduled time;
- Fill the script and you will automatically pay half your usual copay.

For example:

Lipitor 10mg – a 30 day supply (30 tablets) has a \$15.00 copay

Instead purchase Lipitor 20mg – a 30 day supply (15 tablets) has a \$7.50 copay

The list of drugs which are included in this program follow. These drugs are available in double dosage strengths (i.e., 10 mg and 20mg tablets) and are comparably priced. The criteria used to identify the drugs is as follows:

- Medications which have a wide margin of safety so that minimal differences in the size of each split tablet will not result in under or overdosing;
- Tablets can be split relatively evenly without crumbling; and
- Medication will remain stable after splitting.

In addition to meeting this criteria, there are forms of medication which were excluded due to the following:

- Certain kinds of coated tablets;
- Capsules, liquids, topical medications;
- Unscored extended release tablets; and

- Certain combination tablets (i.e., two different medications that are available as a single tablet).

August 20, 2008

Page 2

Participation in this program is strictly voluntary. Those wishing to participate must obtain approval from their physician and obtain a new script since there are certain reasons why someone may not be a candidate for the program, such as severe arthritis, impaired vision or any other disease that will affect an individual's ability to operate the tablet splitter.

United HealthCare will provide one (only) free tablet splitter to any member participating. They simply need to call 1-877-471-1860 to request it. Both participating retail pharmacies and the Medco Mail Service Pharmacy will participate in the program.

The drugs included in the program are:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Medications*</u>	<u>Dosage after Splitting</u>
Antihypertensives ACE Inhibitors	Aceon moexipril (generic version of Univasc) trandolapril (generic version of Mavik)	2mg, 4mg 7.5mg 1mg, 2mg
Antihypertensives Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs)	Benicar Cozaar Diovan	20mg 25mg, 50mg 40mg, 80mg, 160mg
Antidepressants	Lexapro sertraline (generic version of Zoloft)	5mg, 10mg 25mg, 50mg
Lipid-lowering medications	Crestor Lipitor pravastatin sodium (generic version of Prevacol) simvastatin (generic version of Zocor)	5mg, 10mg, 20mg 10mg, 20mg, 40mg 10mg, 20mg 5mg, 10mg, 20mg, 40mg

(*NOTE: List of medications subject to change without notice.)

August 20, 2008

Page 3

Please pass this information on to your membership and feel free to contact me with any questions. **Be sure to emphasis that this program does not take effect until 10/1/08.**

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cc: NYSCOPBA Executive Board
NYSCOPBA Jt. Committee on Health Benefits