

New Hydrocodone Product Prescription Requirement for New York State

Dear Valued Client:

We want to make you aware of an important market dynamic that may affect your plan members. ***This would affect any plan members who obtain prescriptions written by New York State prescribers.***

On November 25, 2012, the state of New York made several changes to the state's controlled substance schedules. Those changes included the reclassification of any product containing hydrocodone. Effective February 23, 2013, all strengths, formulations, and combination products containing hydrocodone become Schedule II controlled substances in New York State. Vicodin is likely the brand name medication you're most familiar with containing hydrocodone.

The new law is specific to the state of New York. Even though the CVS Caremark Pharmacy is located in another state, if the prescription was written by a New York licensed prescriber, our pharmacy is obligated to follow the New York rules pertaining to the issuance and dispensing of the prescription. If the initial prescription was sent to the pharmacy within 30 days from the date the prescription was written by the prescriber, the prescription is still valid. However, if the prescription indicated that refills are permitted, those refills are not valid. To obtain more hydrocodone medication, the patient must present a new hard-copy Official New York Prescription form from their prescriber.

If a prescription was written prior to February 23, 2013 that has already been filled for the initial fill, but had refills remaining, those refills would not be valid after February 23, 2013.

Effective February 23, 2013, refills will no longer be allowed on any hydrocodone prescriptions. A new hard-copy prescription written on an Official New York Prescription form must be mailed by your patient to the CVS Caremark Mail Service and Specialty Pharmacies. Regardless of the classification of hydrocodone in the state the prescription is dispensed, because the prescription was written by a New York prescriber, New York law applies to dispensing of the medication.

It is important to note that the federal classification of hydrocodone products remains unchanged.

For more information on this issue, please visit the New York State Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement website at <http://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/narcotic/>. It details all of the recent changes to New York's controlled substance schedules and includes additional information. You may also contact the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) consumer inquiry line at 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332) or by accessing their Web site at www.fda.gov.

In response to this event, CVS Caremark Mail Service, CVS Caremark Specialty Pharmacies and CVS Retail Pharmacies are sending letters to health care providers who practice in New York State and their patients who take hydrocodone to notify them of this issue.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Thanks,

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