STATE OF NEW YORK

6020

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 29, 2021

Introduced by Sen. THOMAS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to pharmacy benefit managers

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section 280-a of the public health law, as added by chapter 540 of the laws of 2015, subdivisions 3 and 4 as added by section 2 of part MM of chapter 57 of the laws of 2018, is amended to read as follows:

§ 280-a. Pharmacy benefit managers. 1. Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Pharmacy benefit manager" means an entity that contracts with pharmacies or pharmacy contracting agents on behalf of a health plan, state agency, insurer, managed care organization, or other third party payor to provide pharmacy health benefit services or administration.

(b) "Maximum allowable cost price" means a maximum reimbursement amount set by the pharmacy benefit manager for therapeutically equivalent multiple source generic drugs.

(c) "Pharmacy acquisition cost" means the amount that a pharmaceutical wholesaler charges for a pharmaceutical product as listed on the pharmacy's billing invoice.

(d) "Pharmacy benefit manager affiliate" means a pharmacy or pharmacist that directly or indirectly, through one or more intermediaries owns or controls, is owned or controlled by, or is under common ownership or control with a pharmacy benefit manager.

(e) "Pharmacy benefits plan or program" means a plan or program that pays for, reimburses, covers the cost of, or otherwise provides for pharmacist services to individuals who reside in or are employed in this state.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ***italics*** (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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2. A pharmacy benefit manager shall, with respect to contracts between a pharmacy benefit manager and a pharmacy or, alternatively, a pharmacy benefit manager and a pharmacy's contracting agent, such as a pharmacy services administrative organization, include a reasonable process to appeal, investigate and resolve disputes regarding multi-source generic drug pricing**, including being below the pharmacy acquisition cost**. The appeals process shall include the following provisions:

(a) the right to appeal by the pharmacy and/or the pharmacy's contracting agent shall be limited to thirty days following the initial claim submitted for payment;

(b) a telephone number through which a network pharmacy may contact the pharmacy benefit manager for the purpose of filing an appeal and an electronic mail address of the individual who is responsible for processing appeals;

(c) the pharmacy benefit manager shall send an electronic mail message acknowledging receipt of the appeal. The pharmacy benefit manager shall respond in an electronic message to the pharmacy and/or the pharmacy's contracting agent filing the appeal within seven business days indicating its determination. If the appeal is determined to be valid, the maximum allowable cost for the drug shall be adjusted for the appealing pharmacy effective as of the date of the original claim for payment. The pharmacy benefit manager shall require the appealing pharmacy to reverse and rebill the claim in question in order to obtain the corrected reimbursement;

(d) if an update to the maximum allowable cost is warranted, the pharmacy benefit manager or covered entity shall adjust the maximum allowable cost of the drug effective for all [~~similarly situated~~] pharmacies in its network in the state on the date the appeal was determined to be valid; and

(e) if an appeal is denied, the pharmacy benefit manager shall identify the national drug code of a therapeutically equivalent drug, as determined by the federal Food and Drug Administration, that is available for purchase by pharmacies in this state from wholesalers registered pursuant to subdivision four of section sixty-eight hundred eight of the education law at a price which is equal to or less than the maximum allowable cost for that drug as determined by the pharmacy benefit manager.

2-a. (a) If the national drug code number provided by the pharmacy benefit manager is not available below the pharmacy acquisition cost from the pharmaceutical wholesaler from whom the pharmacy or pharmacist purchases the majority of prescription drugs for resale, then the pharmacy benefit manager shall adjust the maximum allowable cost above the challenging pharmacy's pharmacy acquisition cost and permit the pharmacy to reverse and rebill each claim affected by the inability to procure the drug at a cost that is equal to or less than the previously challenged maximum allowable cost.

(b) A pharmacy benefit manager shall not reimburse a pharmacy or pharmacist in this state an amount less than the amount that the pharmacy benefit manager reimburses a pharmacy benefit manager affiliate for providing the same pharmacist services.

(c) The amount shall be calculated on a per unit basis based on the same generic product identified or generic code number.

(d) A pharmacy or pharmacist may decline to provide the pharmacist services to a patient or pharmacy benefit manager if, as a result of a maximum allowable cost, a pharmacy or pharmacist is to be paid less than

the pharmacy acquisition cost of the pharmacy providing pharmacist services.

3. No pharmacy benefit manager shall, with respect to contracts between such pharmacy benefit manager and a pharmacy or, alternatively, such pharmacy benefit manager and a pharmacy's contracting agent, such as a pharmacy services administrative organization:

(a) prohibit or penalize a pharmacist or pharmacy from disclosing to an individual purchasing a prescription medication information regarding:

(1) the cost of the prescription medication to the individual, or

(2) the availability of any therapeutically equivalent alternative medications or alternative methods of purchasing the prescription medication, including but not limited to, paying a cash price; or

(b) charge or collect from an individual a copayment that exceeds the total submitted charges by the pharmacy for which the pharmacy is paid. If an individual pays a copayment, the pharmacy shall retain the adjudicated costs and the pharmacy benefit manager shall not redact or recoup the adjudicated cost.

4. **A pharmacy benefit manager shall:**

(a) provide access to its maximum allowable cost prices to each pharmacy subject to the maximum allowable cost price; and

(b) update its maximum allowable cost prices on a timely basis, but in no event longer than seven calendar days from an increase of ten percent or more in the pharmacy acquisition cost from sixty percent or more of the pharmaceutical wholesaler doing business in the state or a change in the methodology on which the maximum allowable cost price is based or in the value of a variable involved in the methodology.

5. Any provision of a contract that violates the provisions of this section shall be deemed to be void and unenforceable.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.