



PREFERRED DRUG LIST UPDATES

Integrated (Title 19/21 SMI) and ACC, DD, ALTCS and DCS CHP

Additions:

- None

Removals:

- None

Other Updates

- None

Behavioral Health (Title 19/21 Non-SMI & Non-Title 19/21)

Additions:

- None

Removals:

- None

Other Updates

- None

** Drugs that are not on the formulary may be available via PA (prior authorization) **

- For the complete preferred drug lists, please refer to the Mercy Care websites below
 - RBHA: <https://www.mercycareaz.org/providers/rbha-forproviders/pharmacy>
 - [Behavioral Health Preferred Drug List](#): For members who qualify under Non-Title 19/21 determined to have a serious mental illness (SMI) or Non-Title 19/21 children/adolescents with a serious emotional disturbance (SED), Mercy Care RBHA fills only behavioral health medications.
 - [Integrated Preferred Drug List](#): For Title 19/21 SMI members, Mercy Care RBHA fills physical health and behavioral health medications.
 - [Crisis Medication List](#): For adults or children who are Non-Title 19/21 and Non-SMI who present in crisis at any of the facility-based psychiatric urgent care centers, detox facilities and/or access point in Maricopa County. The medications on this list will help stabilize an individual in crisis and bridge them to a follow-up outpatient appointment.
 - ACC, DD, ALTCS and DCS CHP: <https://www.mercycareaz.org/providers/completecare-forproviders/pharmacy>

Depression Scales used in Behavioral Health Practice

In clinical practice and trials, various scales are used to help standardize diagnosis and gauge response to therapy. The Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HAM-D) is one of the oldest and most widely used scales with 21- and 17-item versions. The 17-item is the most commonly used and has scores ranging from zero to 52 points. Scores between seven and 16 generally indicate mild depression while scores over 23 are indicative of severe depression. The HAM-D should be administered by a trained professional to minimize score fluctuation. Scores of seven or less are generally considered indicators of remission, while a change of score of at least 50% is considered a clinical response.

Another commonly used scale in antidepressant trials is the Montgomery-Asberg Depression Rating Scale (MADRS). This tool measures changes in symptoms over time so it can be useful to track response to drug therapy. It contains ten items which are ranked on a zero to six scale and takes about 15 minutes to administer by a trained professional. Scores range from zero to 60. Patients with severe depression generally score 35 or above. Unlike the HAM-D, there is disagreement regarding criteria for remission using the MADRS. Clinical trials generally use a score of ten or less to define remission. Like the HAM-D, you can assume a patient has had a clinical response if their score decreases at least 50% from baseline.

MoCA, SLUMS and MMSE test score interpretation

The Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) is a brief 30-question test that takes around 10 to 12 minutes to complete and is a tool used by healthcare providers to assess a patient's cognitive health and the cause of the cognitive impairment, it's important to quickly find out how an individual's cognitive function is affected so that an appropriate treatment plan can be devised. The MoCA test is a proven and useful cognitive screening tool for many illnesses i.e.: Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and Lewy Body to name a few. MoCA scores range between 0 and 30. A score of 26 or over is considered to be normal. Mild cognitive impairment (MCI) scores are an average of 22.1; people with Alzheimer's disease score an average of 16.2.

The Saint Louis University Mental Status (SLUMS) exam takes about 7 minutes to administer. It is available in multiple languages. The screen uses 11 questions covering several categories orientation, short-term memory, calculations, naming of animals, clock drawing test, recognition of geometric figures and each response gets scored for a total of 30. The SLUMS exam works to assess mild cognitive impairment. SLUMS scores: Scores of 27 to 30 are considered normal in a person with a high school education. Scores between 21 and 26 suggest a mild neurocognitive disorder. Scores between 0 and 20 indicate dementia.

The Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) is a 30-point questionnaire that is used extensively in clinical and research settings to measure cognitive impairment. It is commonly used in medicine to screen for dementia. During the MMSE, a health professional asks a patient a series of questions designed to test a range of everyday mental skills. The maximum MMSE score is 30 points. A score of 20 to 24 suggests mild dementia, 13 to 20 suggests moderate dementia, and less than 12 indicates severe dementia.

Reminder for quicker determinations of a Prior Authorization use the ePA link for Our Providers: Please click [here to initiate an electronic prior authorization \(ePA\)](#) request

References:

1. Zimmerman M, Martinez JH, Young D, et al. Severity classification on the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale. *J Affect Disord* 2013; 150:384-8.
2. Cusin C, Yang H, Yeung A, et al. Rating scales for depression. In: Baer L, Blais MA. *Handbook of clinical rating scales and assessment in psychiatry and mental health*. New York, NY: Springer, 2009:7-36
3. <https://www.mocatest.org/>
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6247398/>
5. https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/diagnosis/medical_tests
6. https://www.slu.edu/medicine/internal-medicine/geriatric-medicine/aging-successfully/pdfs/slums_form.pdf
7. <https://www.slu.edu/medicine/internal-medicine/geriatric-medicine/aging-successfully/assessment-tools/mental-status-exam.php>

This newsletter is brought to you by the Mercy Care Pharmacy Team. For questions, please email Fanny A Musto (MustoF@mercycaresaz.org), Denise Volkov (VolkovD@mercycaresaz.org) or Trennette Gilbert (gilbert@mercycaresaz.org)