

## Unison's Automated Prerequisite Step Therapy Program

Unison Health Plan applies Automated Prerequisite Step Therapy criteria to certain medications that have clinically appropriate and cost-effective alternatives that can be used as initial therapy for the condition in question. This procedure helps to monitor utilization, enhance PDL compliance, and promote appropriate prescribing and delivery of high quality cost-effective care. Unison's Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee established the Automated Prerequisite Step Therapy Criteria for these services.

Unison's PDL Automated Prerequisite Step Therapy criteria is based on solid evidence-based review principles. These principles include current literature reviews, consultation with practicing physicians and pharmacists who serve in Unison's service area and who possess a wide range of specialized medical expertise, governmental agency program (i.e. U.S. Food and Drug Administration [FDA]), as well as national accreditation organization standards. Prior authorization criteria are revised and updated annually and more frequently as new evidence becomes available that prompts needed revisions.

The automated portion of this program will occur as follows. When the prescription, for a drug that is part of the step-therapy protocol, is presented at the pharmacy and processed:

1. The claims processing system will look at the patient's drug history.
2. If the prerequisite step-therapy protocol criteria are met, based on the patient's profile or demographic information, as defined in the applicable step therapy criteria for the drug in question, the claim will process.
3. If these criteria are not met, the claim will deny at the point-of-service with a customized message specific to the requested agent identifying this as a step therapy and indicating the prerequisite alternatives.
4. When the claim is denied, due to this edit at the point-of-service, the pharmacist will need to contact the prescriber to request an alternate therapy or to initiate the prior authorization request process.

Physicians who intend to prescribe drugs for which step therapy is required, for patients that do not satisfy the step therapy protocol criteria, should request prior authorization from Unison using the Medical Exception Request Form.