



Use of First-Line Psychosocial Care for Children and Adolescents

In order to continue improving the quality of care for our members, El Paso Health is committed in keeping our Providers informed and up to date on national trends. The following information pertains to Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measure regarding the importance psychosocial care or residential behavioral health treatment prior to prescribing antipsychotics to children and teens.

HEDIS MEASURE

HEDIS APP Use of First-Line Psychosocial Care for Children and Adolescents on Antipsychotics: The percentage of children and adolescents 1–17 years of age who had a new prescription for an antipsychotic medication and had documentation of psychosocial care as first-line treatment.

IMPORTANCE OF HEDIS MEASURE

There is a national shortage of mental health providers and the El Paso region is one of the hardest hit areas in the country, according to a local media report from August 2023. While the MCO does contract with every available mental health provider in El Paso, the demand for such services remains higher than what the network can handle. Underutilization of safer psychosocial interventions might be overlooked, leaving children and adolescents to incur the risks that are associated with antipsychotic medications.

HOW YOU CAN HELP MEET THE MEASURE?

Unless the patient has a diagnosis that warrants the clinical appropriateness of first-line antipsychotic medication, please ensure you've already assessed and tried psychosocial care as a first-line treatment before prescribing medications.

- Psychotherapy can help patients build better coping skills.
- Members that receive psychotherapy are more likely to respond better to their known stressors.
- Research has shown that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can be more effective for anxiety and depression than medication.
- Recognize the importance of conducting a comprehensive assessment, which can help to both understand the mental health needs of the child/adolescent and to lead to accuracy of the diagnosis.
- Help educate families about the benefits and availability of non-pharmacological treatment.
- Establish good communication and care coordination between behavioral health provider and PCP
- Monitor metabolic levels to detect any irregularities that could be indicators of the antipsychotic medication side effects.
- Consider using the lowest effective dose when antipsychotic medications are necessary
- Consider first line of psychosocial interventions for patients with nonpsychotic conditions.
- Encourage patients to keep appointments and reschedule any missed appointments.

Diagnoses where first-line antipsychotic medications may be clinically appropriate include:

- Schizophrenia
- Schizoaffective disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Other psychotic disorder
- Autism
- or other developmental disorder

Antipsychotic Medications

Description	Prescription
Miscellaneous Antipsychotic Agents	Aripiprazole, Asenapine, Brexpiprazole, Cariprazine, Clozapine, Haloperidol, lloperidone, Loxapine, Lurasidone, Molindone, Olanzapine, Paliperidone, Pimozide, Quetiapine, Risperidone, Ziprasidone
Long-acting injections	Aripiprazole, Fluphenazine decanoate, Haloperidol decanoate, Olanzapine, Paliperidone palmitate, Risperidone, Aripiprazole lauroxil
Phenothiazine Antipsychotics	Chlorpromazine, Fluphenazine, Perphenazine, Thioridazine, Trifluoperazine
Thioxanthenes	Thiothixene
Antipsychotic Combination Medications	
Psychotherapeutic combinations	Fluoxetine-olanzapine Perphenazine-amitriptyline