

## Pharmacy coverage changes for COVID-19 services upon ARP and PREP Act expiration

The Indiana Health Coverage Programs (IHCP) announces upcoming coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccine, testing and treatment coverage changes to the pharmacy benefit. Changes to coverage are a result of the expiration of the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021* (ARP) requirements on Sept. 30, 2024, and the expiration of COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) flexibilities in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness \(PREP\) Act](#) on Dec. 31, 2024.



### COVID-19 vaccines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) have added COVID-19 vaccination to the Child and Adolescent and Adult Immunization Schedules. As established in *IHCP Bulletins* [BT2023107](#) and [BT202210](#), COVID-19 vaccine will continue to be available without cost sharing for eligible IHCP members through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program and as part of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) requirements. Beginning Oct. 26, 2024, reimbursement as established in *IHCP Bulletin* [BT2023162](#) to non-VFC-enrolled pharmacies for COVID-19 vaccine pharmacy claims administered to VFC-eligible members will discontinue. Additionally, effective Oct. 26, 2024, COVID-19 vaccine reimbursement will no longer be a covered service through the pharmacy benefit for members in the limited benefit categories, including Emergency Services Only and the Family Planning Eligibility Program.

Effective Oct. 1, 2024, COVID-19 vaccine administration reimbursement will remain at the adjusted Medicare rate; however, reimbursement for commercially available COVID-19 vaccines will follow reimbursement methodology consistent with all other vaccines that process through the pharmacy benefit. Additionally on Oct. 1, 2024, reimbursement for pharmacist-provided Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) stand-alone COVID-19 vaccine counseling will end as a result of the expiration of ARP.

Pharmacists may continue to prescribe COVID-19 vaccines for eligible IHCP members as established in *IHCP Bulletins* [BT2020127](#) and [BT202102](#) per the HHS *PREP Act* through December 2024.

COVID-19 vaccines have been carved out of the managed care plans since December 2020, as announced in *IHCP Bulletin* [BT2020127](#). Beginning **Jan. 1, 2025**, COVID-19 vaccine pharmacy claims for members in the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP), Hoosier Healthwise, Hoosier Care Connect and Indiana Pathways for Aging (PathWays) plans will begin processing through the managed care entity's (MCE's) pharmacy benefit in which the member is enrolled.

**COVID-19 testing**

Effective Oct. 1, 2024, at-home COVID-19 tests will no longer be covered through the IHCP pharmacy benefit. Coverage of COVID-19 testing will be available for eligible IHCP members through the medical benefit.

**COVID-19 treatments**

Beginning Oct. 1, 2024, the ARP cost-share removal requirements related to COVID-19 treatments announced in *IHCP Banner Page [BR202322](#)* will sunset. This includes treatments for acute infection, post-COVID-19 conditions and the treatment of a condition that could seriously complicate COVID-19 infection for the period in which the member is experiencing COVID-19 infection.

The IHCP will discontinue reimbursement of COVID-19 treatments that have not obtained U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, effective Oct. 1, 2024. The IHCP will continue to reimburse IHCP-enrolled pharmacy providers for Paxlovid pharmacy claims ordered by a pharmacist, as established in *IHCP Bulletin [BT202266](#)*, through December 2024. Correspondingly, covered entities participating in the 340B Program must continue to obtain no-cost Paxlovid through their current channels or use the PAXCESS program for the IHCP members they serve, as announced in *IHCP Bulletin [BT202416](#)*, through Dec. 31, 2024.

**For more information**

Please direct pharmacy-related questions about COVID-19 vaccinations, at-home COVID-19 tests and COVID-19 oral antivirals for fee-for-service (FFS) members, or questions about this bulletin, to the Optum Rx Clinical and Technical Help Desk by calling toll-free 855-577-6317.

Questions about at-home COVID-19 tests, COVID-19 oral antivirals and pharmacy claim submission for members in HIP, Hoosier Care Connect, Hoosier Healthwise or PathWays should be directed to the MCE with which the member is enrolled.

Questions about FFS member COVID-19 medical benefits should be directed to Gainwell Technologies Customer Assistance at 800-457-4584 or your [Provider Relations consultant](#).

**QUESTIONS?**

If you have questions about this publication, please contact Customer Assistance at 800-457-4584.

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