

## Medications: Covered or Not?

April 27, 2007

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## Objectives

- To identify the related emotional issues
- To understand the thought process needed to determine coverage of medications by hospice
- To list the "Never" and "Cadillac" drugs
- To define palliative chemotherapy
- To discuss the process of handling non-covered medications
- To discuss cases

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## Why is This So Hard?

- Open Access
- VP/Medical Director change
- Difficulty with "No"
- Entitlement when dying
- Dealing with physicians
- "The doctor said...."
- \$\$\$ conversations
- Grey line
- Frustration with "case by case"

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**#1: Related to Hospice Diagnosis or Not?**

- > Is the medication relieving symptoms caused by diagnosis? (includes indirect)
- > Is the medication preventing worsening of symptoms causing by diagnosis?
- > Is the medication more related to prolonging life versus quality of life?

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**Requirements**

- > Hospice covers related medications
  - Hospice determines formulary
  - Other hospice practices
- > Medicare: paying for non-hospice meds

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**#2: Related to Dying Process or Not?**

- > Respiratory distress
- > GERD
- > Terminal agitation
- > Bowel/Bladder issues
- > Fever
- > Fluid overload
- > Comfort kit

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### If Not MVH.....

- How did the patient get the medications before?
- What pharmacy did the patient use?
- How were medications paid for before?

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### "Never Drugs"

- Cholesterol meds
- Megace
- Vitamins
- Synthroid (exception: thyroid cancer)
- Estrogen
- HTN meds (exception: Cardiac dx)
- Antihistamines (exception: Benadryl)
- Arthritis meds
- Depression (exception: related to dx)

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### "Cadillac Drugs"

- Documentation of intervention & response to first line drugs needed
- Zofran
- Erythropoietin
- Zyprexa
- Actiq
- Octreotide
- Levaquin
- Approval by Medical Director

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## Palliative Chemo

- > Definition: Relieving a specific symptom
- > Oncologists use a different definition of palliative
- > Must be evidence based
- > Medical Director approval
- > Answer may not be immediate

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## Process

- > Review medications including medication history
- > Use Critical Thinking skills
- > Decide which ones covered including OTC meds
- > If unsure, call Clinical Manager or VP
- > Discuss with attending physician
- > Obtain information BEFORE calling Medical Director
- > Does NOT mean patient cannot receive med!!!!
- > Commercial Insurance: Outlier Option
- > Complete Medication Form for:
  - "Never Drugs"
  - "Cadillac Drugs"
  - "Palliative Chemo"

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## Case #1

- > Patient with breast cancer, bone mets, long psych history including depression, CHF resulting from Adriamycin
- > Meds
  - MS Contin
  - Advil
  - Zyprexa
  - Lasix
  - Tenormin
  - Synthroid
  - Sudafed

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### Case #2

> Patient with Decline in Health Status, DM, HTN, Arthritis

> Meds

- Insulin
- HTN med
- Vitamins
- Megace
- Cholesterol meds
- Levaquin

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### Outcome

- > Have \$\$\$ to spend on other programs
- > Have \$\$\$ to spend on high cost drugs for a specific patient
- > Being good stewards of our finances
- > Benchmark with other hospices

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# Merrimack Valley Hospice

## Non-Covered Drugs

Effective 4/27/07

### Never Drugs

Cholesterol meds  
Megace  
Vitamins  
Synthroid  
Estrogen  
HTN meds  
Antihistamines  
Arthritis meds  
Depression  
Procrit

#### Requires:

- Non-formulary form completed
- Medical Director signature not needed

### Cadillac Drugs

Zofran  
Erythropoetin  
Zyprexa  
Actiq  
Octreotide  
Levaquin

#### Requires:

- Discussion with Medical Director
- Approval by Medical Director
- Non-formulary form completed

### Palliative Chemo (relieving a specific sx)

#### Requires:

- Discussion with Medical Director
- Approval by Medical Director
- Non-formulary form completed

**Merrimack Valley Hospice**  
**Non-Covered Drugs**  
Effective 4/27/07

**Never Drugs**

Cholesterol meds  
Megace  
Vitamins  
Synthroid  
Estrogen  
HTN meds  
Antihistamines  
Arthritis meds  
Depression  
Procrit

Requires:

- Non-formulary form completed
- Medical Director signature not needed

**Cadillac Drugs**

Zofran  
Erythropoetin  
Zyprexa  
Actiq  
Octreotide  
Levaquin

Requires:

- Discussion with Medical Director
- Approval by Medical Director
- Non-formulary form completed

**Palliative Chemo** (relieving a specific sx)

Requires:

- Discussion with Medical Director
- Approval by Medical Director
- Non-formulary form completed

# Non-Formulary Medication Coverage

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospice Diagnosis: (include secondary):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Non-Formulary Medication Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Other:

## Signatures:

Nurse: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinical Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Director (if required): \_\_\_\_\_

*(Forward to Pam Saucier)*