

Step Therapy helps members control costs.

UnitedHealthcare's Step Therapy program helps steer members to less expensive, but equally effective medications. They get the treatment they need, usually at a lower cost, and our customers save money.

Most therapeutic classes have multiple medication options. Clinical effectiveness may be similar, but pricing can vary. Step Therapy is an effective way to move members to less expensive medications, while still allowing access to the higher cost medications if needed.

Here's how it works:



Members are required to initially try a Step 1 medication before a Step 2 medication can be covered. When a member presents a Step 2 prescription at the pharmacy, their claims history may automatically be checked to see if they previously filled a prescription for a Step 1 medication. If the member has a claims history of a Step 1 medication, the Step 2 medication may be processed without member disruption. If not, the prescriber is contacted to discuss the Step 1 options and process for coverage reviews. The prescriber may agree to change the member to the Step 1 medication. Or, if a coverage review was requested and the member meets the clinical criteria, a Step 2 medication is covered.

Member experience

When a member fills a Step 2 medication, the pharmacist receives a message telling them the Step 1 medication(s) and options available for drug coverage. The prescriber is contacted by the pharmacy to discuss Step 1 medication options and next steps.

When customers implement Step Therapy, for most medications, members currently using a Step 2 medication will not be affected. They can continue on therapy without getting a new prescription.



For more information, contact your broker or UnitedHealthcare representative.

Please note that you may need to add Step Therapy language to your Summary Plan Description (SPD) in order to implement this program. Please contact your UnitedHealthcare representative if you need assistance with your SPD or if you have questions.

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