

Medicaid Nutritional Supplement Benefit Change

Starting April 1, 2019, nutritional supplements such as Boost and Ensure will no longer be covered under the pharmacy benefit for UCare Medicaid members; however, they may be covered under the medical benefit through a Durable Medical Equipment (DME) provider. This change will impact UCare members enrolled in the following plans: Minnesota Senior Care Plus, UCare Connect, Prepaid Medical Assistance Plan and MinnesotaCare. This change does not affect members in Minnesota Senior Care Health Options (MSHO) or UCare Connect + Medicare.

In February, UCare identified members who obtained these products through their pharmacy and notified them and their providers by mail of this change.

As outlined in the DHS Provider Manual, providers should reference the coverage criteria below, prior to prescribing. If the member meets the criteria, a prescription will need to be sent to a UCare-contracted DME supplier. Search for contracted providers at UCare.org or by calling the Provider Assistance Center at 612-676-3300 or 1-888-531-1493, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. A Prior Authorization will not be required.

Coverage Criteria

Enteral nutritional products are medically necessary if the recipient has a medical condition that causes an inability to absorb adequate nutrients and that has led to weight loss. Oral enteral nutritional products are covered if the patient has a diagnosed medical condition such as, but not limited to:

- A mechanical inability to chew or swallow solid or pureed or blenderized foods.
- A malabsorption problem due to disease or infection.
- An oral aversion that significantly limits the ability to get adequate nutrition through solid or pureed or blenderized foods.
- Weaning from Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN) or feeding tube.
- A medical condition that leads to inability to consume or absorb adequate nutrients.
- Significant weight loss over the past six months or, for children under age 21, has experienced significantly less than expected weight gain.
- If patient receives less than 75 percent of daily nutrition from a nutritionally complete enteral nutrition product, a nutritionist, speech-language pathologist or a physician must write a detailed plan to decrease dependence on the supplement.

UCare does not cover the following:

- Nutritional products for healthy newborns.
- Nutritional products for people living in long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes as this is included in the per diem.
- Nutritional products for which the need is nutritional rather than medical or is related to an unwillingness to consume solid or pureed foods.
- Nutritional products that are requested as a convenient alternative to preparing or consuming regular foods.
- Nutritional products for which coverage is requested because of an inability to afford regular foods or supplements. Patients who cannot afford food should contact their county of residence to apply for assistance programs.