



MEDICAL POLICY STATEMENT

TrueCare

Policy Name & Number	Date Effective
Drug Testing-TrueCare-MM-1726	07/01/2025-05/31/2026
Policy Type	
MEDICAL	

Medical Policy Statements are derived from literature based on and supported by clinical guidelines, nationally recognized utilization and technology assessment guidelines, other medical management industry standards, and published MCO clinical policy guidelines. Medically necessary services include, but are not limited to, those health care services or supplies that are proper and necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of disease, illness, or injury and without which the patient can be expected to suffer prolonged, increased, or new morbidity, impairment of function, dysfunction of a body organ or part, or significant pain and discomfort. These services meet the standards of good medical practice in the local area, are the lowest cost alternative, and are not provided mainly for the convenience of the member or provider. Medically necessary services also include those services defined in any Evidence of Coverage or Certificate of Coverage documents, Medical Policy Statements, Provider Manuals, Member Handbooks, and/or other plan policies and procedures.

Medical Policy Statements do not ensure an authorization or payment of services. Please refer to the plan contract (often referred to as the Evidence of Coverage or Certificate of Coverage) for the service(s) referenced in the Medical Policy Statement. Except as otherwise required by law, if there is a conflict between the Medical Policy Statement and the plan contract, then the plan contract will be the controlling document used to make the determination.

According to the rules of Mental Health Parity Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of a behavioral health disorder will not be subject to any limitations that are less favorable than the limitations that apply to medical conditions as covered under this policy.

Table of Contents

A.	Subject.....	2
B.	Background.....	2
C.	Definitions	2
D.	Policy	3
E.	Conditions of Coverage	6
F.	Related Policies/Rules	6
G.	Review/Revision History	6
H.	References.....	6

A. Subject
Drug Testing

B. Background

Drug testing is part of medical care during an initial assessment, ongoing monitoring, and recovery phases for members with substance use disorder (SUD), those at risk for abuse/misuse or diversion of drugs, and for other medical conditions. Drug testing assists providers in diagnosing and planning member care when prescription medication or illegal drug use or abuse is of concern.

Drug testing is one component of a comprehensive clinical approach during the initial assessment, stabilization, maintenance, and recovery phase for members with SUD. The assessment process, including initial drug testing, aids the treatment provider in individualizing the drug testing plan for a member. Testing is also used for the periodic screening of members prescribed chronic opioid therapy (COT) for pain based on a risk score and helps determine if a member is adhering to prescription medication, reveals nonprescribed drugs or illicit drugs, and/or provides evidence to suggest diversion.

Providers requesting drug testing should have proficiency in drug test interpretation and an understanding of tests that need ordered. Urine testing is the most common method for monitoring drug use with 2 main types, presumptive and confirmatory. Ethical use of drug testing requires a testing panel and frequency that is justified by the member's clinical condition and the ordering provider's actual need for information.

TrueCare follows Mississippi (MS) Division of Medicaid (DOM) policies and procedures and guidance from the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) for the treatment of any substance use disorder.

C. Definitions

- **Aberrant Behavior** – Behaviors indicating medication or drug abuse or misuse (ie, losing prescriptions, early refill requests, multiple prescribers for controlled substances).
- **Chronic Opioid Therapy (COT)** – The use of opioids to treat chronic pain at intervals longer than 3 months or past the time of normal tissue healing.
- **Confirmatory/Quantitative/Definitive Test** – A specific drug test that can determine the precise identity and quantity of a substance.
- **Diversion** – Unlawful channeling of regulated pharmaceuticals from legal sources to the illicit marketplace.
- **Induction** – A phase of opioid treatment during which maintenance medication dosage levels are adjusted until a patient attains stabilization.
- **Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)** – The use of medication in combination with behavioral health (BH) services to provide an individualized approach to the treatment of SUD, including opioid use disorder (OUD).
- **Opioid Treatment Program (OTP)** – A program or qualified provider delivering treatment to members with an opioid agonist treatment medication.

- **Presumptive/Qualitative Test** – The testing of a substance or mixture to detect the presence of a drug or drug class.
- **Random Drug Test** – A laboratory drug test administered at an irregular interval that is not known in advance by the member.
- **Relapse** – A person with addiction issues returns to use after a period of sobriety.

D. Policy

- I. The initial 30 presumptive and 12 definitive tests per member per calendar year require no medical necessity review. TrueCare will review medical necessity on a case-by-case basis for subsequent testing after these initial limits are met.
 - A. Each CPT code is counted as 1 test. TrueCare reserves the right to review medical records to determine the appropriateness of any initial drug tests ordered within a calendar year when determining medical necessity for additional tests.
 - B. Documentation required for medical necessity review
Copies of test results are not sufficient documentation of medical necessity to support a claim. Documentation must match the number, level and complexity of testing components performed and should include the physician's order and provider documentation in the member's record. The MS DOM and MS Department of Mental Health (DMH) publish documentation standards and requirements on the State's website. CareSource follows State guidelines regarding documentation standards.
- II. Additional guidelines for confirmatory testing
Confirmatory testing should not routinely be utilized as the first choice for UDT. Medical necessity criteria for confirmatory testing is met when **ONE** of the following is recorded in the medical documentation:
 - A. Presumptive testing was negative for prescription medications when provider was expecting a positive result. Member reports taking medication as prescribed.
 - B. Presumptive testing was positive for prescription drug(s) with abuse potential not prescribed by provider, and the member disputes the test result.
 - C. Presumptive testing was positive for an illegal drug, and the member disputes the test result.
 - D. A specific substance or metabolite needs identified that cannot be identified by a presumptive test (ie, semi- or synthetic opioids, specific benzodiazepines).
 - E. A panel of drugs may be performed as part of an initial assessment to develop a monitoring plan but should only be conducted if there is a need for testing with greater than 14 drug classes, rarely indicated for routine UDT.
- III. A review of medical necessity is not required in an emergency department (ED) setting. Blood drug testing is considered medically necessary when in an ED setting, but confirmatory testing is rarely needed in this setting. Utilization will be monitored by TrueCare.
- IV. Providers and laboratories will ensure specimen integrity appropriate for the stability of the drug being tested. If tampering is suspected, the sample should be discarded. When possible, the member will remain at the facility until a new specimen is obtained and can be tested. TrueCare may request documentation of FDA-approved

complexity levels for instrumented equipment and/or Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Certificates of Registration, compliance, or accreditation as a high complexity lab. Labs must maintain documentation of lab results with copies of orders for drug tests.

V. Other Testing Guidance

A. Clinical Indications

Testing should be individualized to the member, including analytes testing ordered based on the member's drug(s) of choice. Periodically, drugs commonly used or regionally prevalent may be rotated into a random testing schedule with rationale not meant to include all drugs all the time, but rather, drugs most likely to be present in the member to assist specific treatment. The lowest level of testing should be used to advise the provider that intervention is needed.

Providers should understand windows of detection time to determine frequency of testing and detection windows for drugs. Providers should also be aware of the potential for cross-reactivity when using presumptive tests. Drug testing does not have to be associated with an office visit.

1. Drug testing in addiction treatment
 - a. UDT is expected more frequently early in treatment or when tapering and is expected to decrease as a member stabilizes.
 - b. Prior to initiation or in the Induction Phase (early recovery and including members who have relapsed):
 01. Obtain history, as well as a medical and psychological assessment.
 02. Review approximate time frame of drug detected in urine.
 03. Identify questions to answer, as well as treatment planning options based on potential UDT results.
 04. Obtain an individualized baseline UDT based on member's unique clinical presentation, prescribed medications, member's self-reported drugs of choice and regional drug trends.
 05. Test at least weekly, citing ASAM consensus guidelines.
 06. Discuss results with the member.
 07. Agree on a plan of care, including treatment interventions and goals.
 - c. Maintenance phase: test at least once per month.
 - d. Intensive outpatient: test at least weekly.
 - e. SUD residential treatment program: test at least monthly.
 - f. Stable recovery: requires less frequent drug testing.
 - g. Members taking long-acting naltrexone: test at least monthly.
2. Drug testing in OTP per member
 - a. Maintenance treatment: federal regulations governing OTPs require initial toxicology plus 8 random UDT screens per year.
 - b. Short-term detoxification treatment: one initial UDT.
 - c. Long-term detoxification treatment: an initial and monthly random UDTs.
3. Drug testing by advanced practice registered nurse (APRN)
 - a. Prescribing naltrexone to treat OUD: complete UDT or serum medication levels at least every 3 months for the first year and then at least every 6 months thereafter.

- b. Prescribing buprenorphine products: complete UDT or serum medication levels at least twice per quarter for the first year of treatment and once per quarter thereafter.
 - 4. Chronic pain management
 - a. Prior to or upon initiation of treatment:
 - 01. Complete an assessment for risk of abuse using a validated risk assessment screening tool (ie, Screener and Opioid Assessment for Patient with Pain-Revisited [SOAPP-R], Opioid Risk Tool [ORT]).
 - 02. Review the Mississippi Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP).
 - 03. Obtain baseline UDT screening and discuss results with the member.
 - 04. Agree on a plan of care, including treatment goals, and provide education on risks and benefits with strategies to mitigate risks.
 - 05. Combine evidence-based, non-pharmacologic and non-opioid pharmacologic therapy, as necessary.
 - b. Ongoing monitoring of treatment determined by level of risk for SUD:
 - 01. Review PMP data every 1-3 months.
 - 02. Evaluate benefits and risks of treatment at least every 3 months.
 - 03. Test at the following intervals:
 - (1). Low risk: UDT once a year.
 - (2). Moderate risk: UDT twice a year.
 - (3). High risk: UDT up to 4 times a year.
 - (4). Presence of aberrant drug-related behavior: UDT immediately.
 - B. Unexpected Results

Potential reasons for unexpected results should be considered (ie, member nonadherence, lab errors, member metabolic rates, diversion). Any possible aberrant behaviors should be identified by the provider responsible for care and discussed with the member. Potential interventions should be implemented and may include (not an all-inclusive list):

 - 1. Evaluate and discuss factors contributing to relapse.
 - 2. Minimize tampering opportunities during collection of sample.
 - 3. Monitor pill counts and/or review the PMP.
 - 4. Adjust dose and/or collaborate with or refer to a specialist.
 - 5. Change the level of care, intensity of treatment or plan of treatment (ie, add behavioral therapy, enhance community supports).
 - 6. Examine a change in lifestyle (ie, housing, support system) and attend to psychosocial barriers, such as transportation or financial needs.
 - 7. Address co-occurring medical or BH needs.
 - 8. Obtain a confirmatory UDT.
- VI. Testing considered not medically necessary, including, but not limited to
 - A. Testing that is not individualized, including, but not limited to
 - 1. reflexive testing
 - 2. routine, standard, standing, nonspecific, and/or preprinted orders
 - 3. all tests a machine can do because the result may be positive
 - 4. large, arbitrary panels and/or universal testing
 - 5. orders for “*Conduct additional testing as needed.*”
 - B. Testing required by third parties, including, but not limited to:

1. court-ordered testing for other medico-legal purpose, such as child custody
 2. pre-employment or random testing required for employment
 3. physician's health programs (eg, recovery programs for physicians, dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists)
 4. athletic testing, testing for school entry or military service
 5. forensic testing
 6. testing in residential treatment facility, partial hospital, or sober living as a condition to remain in that community
 7. testing with another pay source that is primary, such as a county, state or federal agency
 8. other administrative testing purposes (eg, testing for a driver's license)
 9. testing for routine physical and/or medical examination conditions
- C. blood drug testing when completed outside the ED
- D. hair, saliva, or other body fluid testing for controlled substance monitoring
- E. any type of drug testing not addressed in this policy
- F. routine use of confirmatory testing following an expected negative presumptive result
- G. custom profiles or panels testing
- H. confirmatory tests prior to discussing results of presumptive tests with members

E. Conditions of Coverage

- I. Compliance with the provisions in this policy may be monitored and addressed through post payment data analysis, subsequent medical review audits, recovery of overpayments identified, and provider prepay review.
- II. Testing for validity of specimen is included in the payment for the test and will not be reimbursed separately.

F. Related Policies/Rules

Medical Necessity Determinations

G. Review/Revision History

DATE		ACTION
Date Issued	03/26/2025	New policy. Approved at Committee.
Date Revised		
Date Effective	07/01/2025	
Date Archived	05/31/2026	This Policy is no longer active and has been archived. Please note that there could be other Policies that may have some of the same rules incorporated and CareSource reserves the right to follow CMS/State/NCCI guidelines without a formal documented Policy.

H. References

1. American Society of Addiction Medicine. Public policy statement on drug testing as a component of addiction treatment and monitoring programs and in other clinical settings. Updated October 2010. Accessed February 28, 2025. www.asam.org

The MEDICAL Policy Statement detailed above has received due consideration as defined in the MEDICAL Policy Statement Policy and is approved.

2. Andersson HW, Wenaas M, Nordfjærn T. Relapse after inpatient substance use treatment: a prospective cohort study among users of illicit substances. *Addict Behav.* 2019;90:222-228. doi:10.1016/j.addbeh.2018.11.008
3. *CLIA Program and Medicare Lab Services*. US Dept Health and Human Services; 2023. MLN 006270. Accessed February 28, 2025. www.cms.gov
4. Dowell D, Haegerich TM, Chou R. CDC guideline for prescribing opioids for chronic pain-United States, 2016. *JAMA.* 2016;315(15):1624-1645. doi:10.1001/jama.2016.1464
5. For providers: provider documents. Mississippi Department of Mental Health. Accessed February 28, 2025. www.dmh.ms.gov
6. Jaffe A, Molnar S, Williams N, et al. Review and recommendations for drug testing in substance use treatment contexts. *J Reward Defic Syndr Addict Sci.* 2016;2(1):28-45. doi:10.17756/jrdsas.2016-0
7. Jarvis M, Williams J, Hurford M, et al. Appropriate use of drug testing in clinical addiction medicine. *J Addict Med.* 2017;11(3):163-173. doi:10.1097/ADM.0000000323
8. Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Use Disorders, 42 C.F.R. §§ 8.1 to 8.34 (2025).
9. Mississippi Prescription Monitoring Program. Mississippi Board of Pharmacy. Accessed February 28, 2025. www.pmp.mbp.ms.gov
10. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Health Sciences Policy; Phillips JK, et al. *Pain Management and the Opioid Epidemic: Balancing Societal and Individual Benefits and Risks of Prescription Opioid Use*. National Academies Press (US); 2017.
11. Raouf M, Bettinger J, Fudin J. A practical guide to urine drug monitoring. *Fed Pract.* 2018;35(4):38-44. Accessed February 28, 2025. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
12. Research by Practitioners; Pharmacies; Research Applications; Construction of Article 7 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 21 U.S.C. 823(g). (2022).
13. Rzetelny A, Zeller B, Miller N, et al. Counselors' clinical use of definitive drug testing results in their work with substance-use clients: a qualitative study. *Int J Ment Health Addict.* 2016;14:64-80. doi:10.1007/s11469-015-9569-7
14. Stanos SP. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). *Pain Med.* 2017;18(10):1835-1836. doi:10.1093/pm/pnx224U.S
15. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Clinical Drug Testing in Primary Care: Technical Assistance Publication 32*. HHS Publication No. 12-4668. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; 2012.
16. Urine Drug Testing in Clinical Practice: *The Art and Science of Patient Care*. 6th ed. PharmaCom Group Inc; 2015. Accessed February 28, 2025. www.paindr.com