

CMS Prescribing Limits for PRN Psychotropics

Psychotropics are a broad class of medications that act on brain chemicals

Psychotropics include: anti-anxiety agents • antidepressants • antipsychotics • mood stabilizers • sedatives • stimulants

Due to increased adverse effect risk in the elderly CMS issued limits for psychotropics when prescribed "as needed":

Psychotropics (EXCLUDING antipsychotics)

E.g.: Clonazepam, Lorazepam, Trazodone, Zolpidem

- Therapy Duration limit – 14 days
- Exception – can be > 14 days if prescriber rationalizes need:
 - o Documents rationale in medical record
 - o Indicates a specific duration
 - Can be up to 60-90 days to cover until the next evaluation of the resident
- If no rationale provided: order should be discontinued and provider contacted
- During facility behavior meetings, evaluate PRN orders for:
 - o Continued clinical necessity
 - o Appropriate nursing documentation

Checking for Psychotropics – ViewMasterRx

- Request ViewMasterRx psych report to be emailed daily
- Click blue Reports tab on left hand side of VMRx main menu
 - o Scroll down and click Report Scheduler under TOOLS
 - o Find Daily Psychotropic Drug New Starts report and click Schedule in right column
 - Selected Frequency: daily
 - Start date: "todays" date
 - Click boxes for: No End Date & Email (enter email)
 - Change Report Run Time to 7 AM (or a morning time you'd like to receive email)
 - Click acknowledgment statement (that requested emails are valid)
 - Click Schedule button in bottom right corner

Antipsychotic Psychotropics

E.g.: Aripiprazole, Haloperidol, Olanzapine, Risperidone

- Therapy Duration Limit – 14 days (NO exceptions)
- Prescriber/physician may write for a new order (≤ 14 days) only if:
 - o Resident is evaluated via direct examination & assessment of current condition/progress
- Prescribers must document the following in the medical record for a new order as part of the evaluation:
 - o Is the medication still needed on PRN basis?
 - o What is the benefit to the resident?
 - o Have the resident's expressions or indications of distress improved as a result of the PRN medication?

Guide for Nurse Managers in managing PRN orders

- Keep track of PRN psychotropics in order to:
 - o Obtain and enforce stop dates from prescribers
 - o Prompt prescribers to document appropriately
- Check all PRN psychotropic orders for stop dates at least weekly
- Check for resident-specific rationale if stop date >14 days
- Notify prescriber if stop date is within the week (allows time for prescriber to clinically evaluate)

Nurse Managers
play an essential role in managing PRN psychotropic use!