



# Pharmacy Department UPDATES January 2020

## **A paradigm shift in the outpatient treatment for asthma-Symbicort and Dulera for PRN use**

Formoterol is a unique beta-agonist as it is long-acting but at the same time has a rapid onset of action to open airways. The 2019 Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) recommendation to use as-needed ICS-formoterol for reliever therapy has generated much debate and discussion on asthma pharmacotherapy. Though ICS-formoterol inhalers, such as Symbicort and Dulera, are not FDA indicated for asthma rescue therapy, there is strong evidence to support ICS-formoterol being more effective and safer than using short-acting beta agonist, like albuterol, alone for reliever therapy. With this paradigm shift for recommending ICS-formoterol as the preferred reliever option across all steps of the asthma treatment algorithm, you may see more prescriptions for Symbicort and Dulera being used PRN rather than the conventional maintenance dosing. For more information on GINA 2019, please see the link below.

<https://ginasthma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/GINA-2019-main-Pocket-Guide-wms.pdf>

## **Medi-Cal Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Educational Articles: 12/2019 Improving the Quality of Care: Risks Associated with Use of Gabapentin**

The purpose of this educational intervention component of DUR is to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of prescribing and dispensing practices for Medi-Cal recipients. Educational interventions include ongoing dissemination of information through the Medi-Cal provider bulletin process about clinically important, drug-specific therapy problems.

You can use the links below to view the Medi-Cal DUR education bulletin and previous education articles.

<https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/edarticles.asp>

### **Previous Education Articles:**

December 2019: [https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured\\_30152.pdf](https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured_30152.pdf)

October 2019: [https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured\\_30014.pdf](https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured_30014.pdf)

September 2019: [https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured\\_28160.pdf](https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured_28160.pdf)

August 2019: [https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured\\_28115.01.pdf](https://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/dur/Articles/dured_28115.01.pdf)

### **Important Links:**

PHC Formulary Search Tool:

<https://client.formularynavigator.com/Search.aspx?siteTestID=1196>

### **Contact Information:**

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