

November 14, 2002

Dear Pharmacist/VCMC Physician/Clinic Manager/Hospital Manager:

Attached is a brief overview about the MIA formulary revision. Please review the revised formulary and attached protocol thoroughly as it contains some important changes to the current system. The changes are effective immediately.

The formulary was revised in an effort to cut costs associated with County paid prescriptions. The revised formulary has been presented to the VCMC Pharmacy and Therapeutics committee for review and comment, and is currently being disseminated through other appropriate committees.

Please note that the Ventura County Behavioral Health formulary (formerly known as DPS) is unchanged. The contact person for any questions regarding that formulary is Patti Yoshida, Pharm.D. at (805) 652-6187.

If you have any questions about the MIA formulary feel free to contact Express Scripts International, our contracted Pharmacy Benefit Manager, at (800) 233-8065.

Sincerely Yours,

*Medically Indigent Adult Program
(MIA)*

Ventura County Medical Center's Medically Indigent Adult (MIA) program is designed to provide temporary financial assistance to patients who are not able to afford basic medications and when no other means of payment is available. These patients are people who do not have current health insurance, lack the ability to pay for medications, and are not eligible for any other benefit program.

Any patient who desires such assistance must apply for the MIA program and meet established financial criteria before obtaining any medications. Once approved, they may be eligible to receive medications from the newly revised MIA formulary (see Attachment). Many medications require that the patient and physician fill out paperwork for the Free Drug Program. Various pharmaceutical companies offer the Free Drug Program, also commonly known as Patient Assistance Program, for patients who meet the financial guidelines established by those companies. The programs usually cover brand name drugs only. On the MIA formulary an asterisk next to the medication indicates that the medication may be currently obtained through the free drug program. At the time that the medications are ordered, the patient and physician must fill out the free drug paperwork and fax it to the MIA window. When the paperwork is received, the patient will be granted a thirty-day supply of that medication until the free drug application is processed and the patient is converted to the program.

Only medications on the newly revised MIA formulary are available. There will be no more automatic verbal overrides for medications not listed on the formulary. If in very special circumstances, a patient has a medical necessity for a particular medication not on the formulary a form must be completed by the prescribing physician at the time the prescription is written (see Attached form). A pharmacist will review the request and make suggestions for alternatives or grant the override. If the patient is already at the pharmacy to pick up a prescription that is not on the formulary and a form has not been submitted in advance, they will not be able to get the medication from MIA. Please review the new formulary which will be available in a format to download into your Personal Data Assistant. If you have any questions please call the George Boghossian, Pharmacy Manager at (805) 652-6557.

MIA PROTOCOL

1. Patients must apply and qualify for the MIA program by completing the following steps:
 - a. Complete MIA financial statement at the MIA window, or fax complete statement to MIA at (805) 652-6605.
 - b. Patients will be asked to provide additional supporting documentation such as proof of income, bank statements, tax returns, unemployment records, etc.
 - c. If the medication is available through the Free Drug Program (an asterisk next to the medication denotes it is currently available via free drug program) the physician and patient must complete the “Free Drug Paperwork” and return or fax it to the MIA window at (805) 652-6605.
 - d. Patients who currently have Medi-cal are not eligible for the MIA program. A TAR needs to be completed for any needed medications.

2. The ordering physician will determine the quantity and dosage of the drug. Only a thirty (30) day supply may be ordered at a time with a forty-five (45) day limit.

3. Non-Formulary Medications. If the physician needs to order a non formulary medication for a life threatening condition the following steps must occur prior to the prescription being written:
 - a. The ordering physician must complete a “Non Formulary Medication Request Form” and fax it to the Pharmacy at (805) 652-6557. The pharmacy department will review the request and submit suggestions for alternatives or grant the request.
 - b. Generic medications will always be dispensed. If a brand name is requested which is not on the formulary the physician must submit a “Non Formulary Request Form”.

4. The MIA formulary is available in hard copy or will soon be available in an electronic format to be downloaded into a Personal Data Assistant (PDA).