



The **prior authorization (PA)** process can be frustrating. Sometimes you may not find out that your medication requires PA until you hear from your doctor or the pharmacy that your prescription can't be filled. This guide will help you understand the PA process from start to finish.

What is PA?

PA is a review process that health insurance companies follow to determine if a medication (or a service, procedure, piece of equipment, etc.) is medically necessary. If a health insurer approves a doctor's PA request, that means the insurer has decided that it is medically necessary. However, an approved PA **doesn't guarantee payment** for the medication or service.

How do I find out if my medication needs PA or has Step Therapy (ST) in place?

Our formulary (list of covered drugs) tells you which drugs require PA, like this:

What's the step-by-step PA/ST process?



Take note!



- **The doctor begins the PA process.**
- When needed, the doctor can request an expedited (urgent) review if the patient's health is in danger.
- The PA process sometimes gets stalled for various reasons. If that happens, you may see a delay in getting your prescription filled.
- If there's a delay, **ask your doctor if they have submitted the PA request.** If you recently switched insurance companies, you might want to make sure the doctor sent the request to the correct place.
- Your insurance company can tell you if they have received the request and what its status is.

* True Health New Mexico Pharmacy Services will respond to requests for exceptions to the Step Therapy program according to the urgency of the situation. In circumstances where a Step Therapy drug has already been established, True Health New Mexico will provide members impacted by the step therapy program with a temporary supply of medication, pending the outcome of the exception request.