Medication Therapy Management:
Helping Patients Get the Most Out of Their Oral Therapy.
Ensuring optimal care

**WHAT IS MEDICATION THERAPY MANAGEMENT?**
Medication Therapy Management (MTM) is a program led by Oncology Certified Nurses (OCN) who specialize in helping patients manage side effects from their oral oncology medications. MTM is meant to be an extension of the great care patients are already receiving from their oncologist’s office. The program helps ensure patient safety and optimal care by reducing the potential for medication errors, improving patient adherence to treatment, providing education regarding potential side effects and mitigating their magnitude. Our nurses have over 70 years of collective oncology nursing experience and use evidence-based practice in all of the teaching provided to patients.

All patients beginning a new oral oncology medication are encouraged to receive a call from our nurses once a week through at least the first cycle of the medication; patients can opt out at any time. Patients new to Care Advantage who have already been taking the prescribed medication are not routinely set up for nurse calls but are encouraged to call for questions or concerns.

**HOW ARE MTM CALLS SCHEDULED?**
Proactive self-care instruction and patient accountability help ensure adherence and medication compliance. This is especially important during the first 30-60 days of treatment on oral oncology medications. All patients starting a new oral oncology medication receive counseling from a pharmacist or an oncology-certified nurse either on the day of shipping, or within one-two days after receiving the medication. At that time, medication administration is reviewed (i.e., take the medication with/without food, best time of day to take, cycle length, and number of pills being sent). We also discuss commonly reported side effects and side effects management when appropriate. Speaking with the patients before they begin taking the medication better prepares the patient for side effects and also sets the stage for subsequent nurse calls.

MTM calls are made weekly through the first one or two medication cycles. We review administration to ensure the patient understands how to properly take the medication, as well as encourage patients’ medication adherence and compliance.

Combination therapies such as Tykerb (which is taken once daily on an empty stomach) and Xeloda (which is taken twice a day with food) can be very confusing, especially for elderly patients, so follow-up for these types of scenarios are especially important. We review side effects management as appropriate for the medication they have received. We also inquire about missed doses and attempt to ascertain the reason for the missed dose (nausea/vomiting, did they forget the dose, etc). Subsequent weekly calls are similar, making certain the patients are continuing to properly take the medication and treat side effects.
Oral Oncolytics Process Map – Care Advantage

The workflow diagram below demonstrates the typical key functions and roles within the oral oncolytics process, and where Care Advantage can help with time-consuming yet essential tasks to ensure patient safety and compliance.

Provider
- Determine if the patient is a good candidate for oral oncolytics
- Reviews disease, stage, expected start of therapy, side effects
- Plans pretreatment work-up and testing
- Prescribe oral oncolytic
- Provider follow-up 2 weeks after therapy initiated
- Provider follow-up at 1 month after therapy initiated
- Provider sees patient prior to each cycle

Office Nurse
- RN obtains consent
- Reviews medication list for potential drug interactions
- Patient Education on administration and side effects
- RN contacts patient monthly for ongoing monitoring
- RN contacts patient weekly for 2-3 cycles of therapy

Financial Counselor
- Authorization for drug is obtained
- Patient educated on patient financial obligation
- Co-pay assistance referral if needed
- Reviews medication list for potential drug interactions
- Reviews pharmacy benefit co-pay information
- Pharmacy staff reviews potential drug interactions
- Script filled – Sent to patient within X days
- Patient education on administration and side effects
- Refills/Monitoring

Care Advantage Pharmacy
- Specialty Pharmacy entered in EHR. Instruct patient on where to obtain drug
- Reviews pharmacy benefit co-pay information
- Pharmacy staff reviews potential drug interactions
- Script filled – Sent to patient within X days
- Patient education on administration and side effects
- Refills/Monitoring

Receptionist/Scheduler
- Awareness of how to route patient inquiries regarding oral oncolytics
- Specialty Pharmacy entered in EHR. Instruct patient on where to obtain drug
- Practice Tasks
- Pharmacy Tasks
- Tasks provided by Care Advantage vs. Practice
WHAT DO WE OFFER/TEACH?
Many side effects can be effectively managed at home through prophylactic and vigilant self-care. While this list is not all-inclusive, some of the information and instructions provided include:

- Nausea management
- Diarrhea management
- Constipation management
- Skin care prophylaxis
- Oral care for mucositis
- Fatigue management
- Hydration
- Suggestions for supplemental dietary intake for patients with anorexia or dysgeusia
- Encouragement to stay on med!

HOW LONG DOES MTM TYPICALLY LAST?
When a patient has completed approximately 4-8 weeks of therapy, or when we feel confident the patient understands how to properly take the medication and manage their side effects, weekly MTM calls are discontinued. The Care Advantage pharmacy technicians continue calling patients monthly for refills and to arrange shipping. Patients are encouraged to call with questions or concerns at any time throughout their therapy.

DOES CARE ADVANTAGE TAKE CARE OF ALL MTM TASKS?
Care Advantage’s Oncology Certified Nurses can take care of all MTM responsibilities, leaving nurses in the practice more time to focus on providing quality care to their patients in the office. In addition, Patient Access Coordinators are available to help patients secure co-pay assistance when needed, a responsibility that often times falls to the nurses in the practice.

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