

WAC 284-50-260 PKU formula coverage requirements and exceptions.

(1) The purpose of this section is to effectuate the provisions of sections 1 and 2, chapter 173, Laws of 1988, by establishing the requirements and exceptions with respect to coverage for the formulas necessary for the treatment of phenylketonuria (PKU).

(2) Every group disability insurance contract, which is delivered or issued for delivery or renewed in this state on or after September 1, 1988, that insures for hospital or medical expenses shall provide coverage for the formulas necessary for the treatment of phenylketonuria, with the exception of the following contracts, which need not provide such coverage:

(a) A contract of "blanket disability insurance" as defined in RCW 48.21.040;

(b) A group contract designed to provide benefits on an "accident only" or "specified disease only" basis;

(c) A group contract subject to chapter 48.66 RCW and providing medicare supplemental insurance;

(d) A group contract subject to chapter 48.84 RCW and providing long-term care insurance; and

(e) A group contract as to which the commissioner, in writing, consents to the exclusion of PKU formula coverage, upon a finding that such coverage would be inappropriate to the contract.

(3) Every individual disability insurance contract, including a contract of "family expense disability insurance" as defined in RCW 48.20.340 and a contract on a "franchise plan" as defined in RCW 48.20.350, delivered or issued for delivery or renewed in this state on or after September 1, 1988, that insures for hospital or medical expenses, shall provide coverage for the formulas necessary for the treatment of phenylketonuria, subject to the following exceptions:

(a) A contract providing only hospital confinement indemnity coverage, as such coverage is defined in WAC 284-50-345, need not provide the PKU formula coverage;

(b) A contract limited to providing accident only coverage, as such coverage is defined in WAC 284-50-360, need not provide the PKU formula coverage;

(c) A contract providing only specified disease or specified accident coverage, as such coverage is defined in WAC 284-50-365, need not provide the PKU formula coverage;

(d) A contract providing limited benefit health insurance coverage, as such coverage is defined in WAC 284-50-370, need not provide the PKU coverage to the extent that the commissioner allows an exception;

(e) A contract providing basic hospital expense coverage, as such coverage is defined in WAC 284-50-335, may limit the coverage for PKU formulas to a benefit that is based on the cost of formula consumed during a covered hospital stay;

(f) A contract that is subject to chapter 48.66 RCW and provides medicare supplemental insurance need not provide the PKU formula coverage;

(g) A contract that is subject to chapter 48.84 RCW and provides long-term care insurance need not provide the PKU formula coverage; and

(h) A contract as to which the commissioner, in writing, consents to the exclusion of PKU formula coverage, upon a finding that such coverage would be inappropriate to the contract.

(4) Coverage for the formulas necessary for the treatment of phenylketonuria may be limited to the usual and customary charge for such

formulas, and may be made subject to deductibles, copayments, coinsurance or other reductions only to the extent that deductibles, copayments, coinsurance or other reductions are applied to general expenses incurred for common sicknesses or disorders under the provisions of the particular contract. (Relating the PKU formula to a special expense benefit, such as a prescription drug benefit, is not acceptable unless it results in the PKU formula benefit being paid at an amount no less than the amount that would be produced by application of the reimbursement formula for medically necessary treatment for common sicknesses or disorders.)

(5) Premiums for an insured receiving benefits under the PKU formula coverage shall be no greater, by reason thereof, than the premiums for anyone else who is covered under the same form and who is not receiving such benefits.

(6) Preexisting condition provisions shall not be used with respect to PKU formula coverage, and no insurer shall cancel or decline to renew any contract, or restrict, modify, exclude or reduce the amount of benefits payable or type of coverage provided in any contract, because an applicant or insured has phenylketonuria.

(7) For purposes of sections 1 and 2, chapter 173, Laws of 1988, and this section, a contract is "renewed" when it is continued beyond the earliest date, after September 1, 1988, upon which, at the insurer's sole option:

(a) The contract's termination could have been effectuated, for other than nonpayment of premium; or

(b) The contract could have been amended to add the PKU formula coverage, with, if justified, an appropriate rate increase for any increased cost in providing the PKU formula coverage under the contract.

The failure of the insurer to take any such steps does not prevent the contract from being "renewed." The intent of this subsection is to bring the PKU formula benefits under the maximum number of contracts possible at the earliest possible time, by permitting the insurer to exclude such coverage from only those contracts as to which there exists a right of renewal on the part of the insured without any change in any provision of the contract.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 48.02.060 (3)(a), 48.44.050 and 48.46.200. WSR 88-16-065 (Order R 88-7), § 284-50-260, filed 8/1/88.]