

SB 999 (Pavley)

Annual Supply of Contraceptives

Overview

Beginning January 1, 2017, commercial and Medi-Cal managed care health plans must cover up to 12-months of FDA-approved self-administered hormonal contraceptives dispensed at one time as prescribed or requested. Authored by Senator Fran Pavley, the measure was co-sponsored by Essential Access Health (formerly California Family Health Council), Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California, and NARAL Pro-Choice California.

Background

Before SB 999 became state law, health plans often covered only a 30 or 90-day supply of self-administered birth control. This required women to refill a birth control prescription continuously and often became a barrier to consistent use, particularly to those who live in underserved areas.

Consistency is essential for birth control to be effective. Studies show that dispensing a 12-month supply of birth control at one time:

- 1) Reduces a woman's odds of having an unintended pregnancy by 30%
- 2) Increases contraception continuation rates
- 3) Decreases costs to insurers by reducing the number of pregnancy tests and pregnancies

Consistent with these findings, California's Family PACT program has dispensed a year's supply of contraceptives to patients for more than twenty years. In 2016, the Department of Health Care Services also required Medi-Cal Managed Care to cover up to 12-months of oral contraceptives dispensed at one time at onsite clinics.

The Solution: Consistent Access

SB 999 gives insured women access to best practices in contraceptive care, regardless of their health coverage status. The measure allows women enrolled in managed care plans and commercial health insurance plans to obtain up to a 12-month supply of self-administered hormonal contraceptives at one time, as prescribed or requested. Self-administered contraceptives include pills, transdermal patches and vaginal rings.

Health Plan Compliance

- If your health plan has denied you access to a 12-month contraceptive supply, please share your story with us at <http://www.essentialaccess.org/denied>.
- If you would like to help increase awareness about the new law, please contact Sylvia Castillo, Senior Manager of Government + Community Affairs at scastillo@essentialaccess.org.

Annual Supply of Contraceptives (SB 999) Frequently Asked Questions

1. **When does SB 999 take effect?**

SB 999 took effect January 1, 2017.

2. **How does SB 999 improve access to birth control?**

SB 999 requires health insurance plans to cover the dispensing of up to a year's supply of self-administered hormonal contraceptives at one time, as prescribed or requested. If a provider prescribes a woman with a year's worth of birth control, she can be dispensed the full year's supply.

3. **Under SB 999, which birth control methods can be obtained in a 12-month supply?**

Under SB 999, women can obtain up to a 12-month supply of self-administered contraceptives, including pills, transdermal patches (the patch) and vaginal rings.

4. **Who is eligible to receive up to a 12-month supply of contraceptives?**

Women enrolled in Medi-Cal managed care plans and private/commercial health insurances plans (including plans issued through Covered California) can obtain up to a 12-month supply of contraceptives at one time, as prescribed or requested.

5. **Do I have to pick up the entire 12-month contraceptive supply? Can I pick up less than the 12-month supply?**

If the prescription is for up to a 12-month supply, you can choose to pick up the entire 12-month supply or a portion of the supply (ex: you can pick up a 6-month supply twice a year).

6. **Can minors with birth control prescriptions also obtain a 12-month supply of contraceptives under SB 999?**

Yes. Minors have the right to access birth control without parent permission or notice. Minors can now also obtain their full years' worth of birth control under SB 999.

7. **In California, pharmacists can dispense self-administered contraceptives without a prescription. Under SB 999, can a pharmacist dispense up to a 12-month supply of contraceptives? Will health plans cover the supply?**

Yes. Pharmacists can dispense up to a 12-month supply of the contraceptive pill, patch or ring and health plans must cover the supply.