

**§ 156.115 Provision of EHB.**

(a) Provision of EHB means that a health plan provides benefits that—

(1) Are substantially equal to the EHB-benchmark plan including:

- (i) Covered benefits;
- (ii) Limitations on coverage including coverage of benefit amount, duration, and scope; and
- (iii) Prescription drug benefits that meet the requirements of §156.122 of this subpart;

(2) With the exception of the EHB category of coverage for pediatric services, do not exclude an enrollee from coverage in an EHB category.

(3) With respect to the mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment services, required under §156.110(a)(5) of this subpart, comply with the requirements of §146.136 of this subchapter.

(4) Include preventive health services described in §147.130 of this subchapter.

(5) If the EHB-benchmark plan does not include coverage for habilitative services, as described in §156.110(f) of this subpart, include habilitative services in a manner that meets one of the following—

(i) Provides parity by covering habilitative services benefits that are similar in scope, amount, and duration to benefits covered for rehabilitative services; or

(ii) Is determined by the issuer and reported to HHS.

(b) Unless prohibited by applicable State requirements, an issuer of a plan offering EHB may substitute benefits if the issuer meets the following conditions—

(1) Substitutes a benefit that:

(i) Is actuarially equivalent to the benefit that is being replaced as determined in paragraph (b)(2) of this section;

(ii) Is made only within the same essential health benefit category; and

(iii) Is not a prescription drug benefit.

(2) Submits evidence of actuarial equivalence that is:

(i) Certified by a member of the American Academy of Actuaries;

(ii) Based on an analysis performed in accordance with generally accepted actuarial principles and methodologies;

(iii) Based on a standardized plan population; and

(iv) Determined regardless of cost-sharing.

(c) A health plan does not fail to provide EHB solely because it does not offer the services described in §156.280(d) of this subchapter.

(d) An issuer of a plan offering EHB may not include routine non-pediatric dental services, routine non-pediatric eye exam services, long-term/custodial nursing home care benefits, or non-medically necessary orthodontia as EHB.

**§ 156.122 Prescription drug benefits.**

(a) A health plan does not provide essential health benefits unless it:

(1) Subject to the exception in paragraph (b) of this section, covers at least the greater of:

(i) One drug in every United States Pharmacopeia (USP) category and class; or

(ii) The same number of prescription drugs in each category and class as the EHB-benchmark plan; and

(2) Submits its drug list to the Exchange, the State, or OPM.

(b) A health plan does not fail to provide EHB prescription drug benefits solely because it does not offer drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration as a service described in §156.280(d) of this subchapter.

(c) A health plan providing essential health benefits must have procedures in place that allow an enrollee to request and gain access to clinically appropriate drugs not covered by the health plan.

(1) Such procedures must include a process for an enrollee, the enrollee's designee, or the enrollee's prescribing physician (or other prescriber) to request an expedited review based on exigent circumstances.

(i) Exigent circumstances exist when an enrollee is suffering from a health condition that may seriously jeopardize the enrollee's life, health, or ability to regain maximum function or when an enrollee is undergoing a current course of treatment using a non-formulary drug.

(ii) A health plan must make its coverage determination on an expedited

## § 156.125

review request based on exigent circumstances and notify the enrollee or the enrollee's designee and the prescribing physician (or other prescriber, as appropriate) of its coverage determination no later than 24 hours after it receives the request.

(iii) A health plan that grants an exception based on exigent circumstances must provide coverage of the non-formulary drug for the duration of the exigency.

(2) [Reserved]

[78 FR 12866, Feb. 25, 2013, as amended at 79 FR 30350, May 27, 2014]

### § 156.125 Prohibition on discrimination.

(a) An issuer does not provide EHB if its benefit design, or the implementation of its benefit design, discriminates based on an individual's age, expected length of life, present or predicted disability, degree of medical dependency, quality of life, or other health conditions.

(b) An issuer providing EHB must comply with the requirements of § 156.200(e) of this subchapter; and

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent an issuer from appropriately utilizing reasonable medical management techniques.

### § 156.130 Cost-sharing requirements.

(a) *Annual limitation on cost sharing.* (1) For a plan year beginning in the calendar year 2014, cost sharing may not exceed the following:

(i) For self-only coverage—the annual dollar limit as described in section 223(c)(2)(A)(ii)(I) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, for self-only coverage that is in effect for 2014; or

(ii) For other than self-only coverage—the annual dollar limit in section 223(c)(2)(A)(ii)(II) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, for non-self-only coverage that is in effect for 2014.

(2) For a plan year beginning in a calendar year after 2014, cost sharing may not exceed the following:

(i) For self-only coverage—the dollar limit for calendar year 2014 increased by an amount equal to the product of that amount and the premium adjust-

## 45 CFR Subtitle A (10–1–14 Edition)

ment percentage, as defined in paragraph (e) of this section.

(ii) For other than self-only coverage—twice the dollar limit for self-only coverage described in paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section.

(b) [Reserved]

(c) *Special rule for network plans.* In the case of a plan using a network of providers, cost-sharing paid by, or on behalf of, an enrollee for benefits provided outside of such network shall not count toward the annual limitation on cost-sharing (as defined in paragraph (a) of this section).

(d) *Increase annual dollar limits in multiples of 50.* For a plan year beginning in a calendar year after 2014, any increase in the annual dollar limits described in paragraph (a) of this section that does not result in a multiple of 50 dollars will be rounded down, to the next lowest multiple of 50 dollars.

(e) *Premium adjustment percentage.* The premium adjustment percentage is the percentage (if any) by which the average per capita premium for health insurance coverage for the preceding calendar year exceeds such average per capita premium for health insurance for 2013. HHS will publish the annual premium adjustment percentage in the annual HHS notice of benefits and payment parameters.

(f) *Coordination with preventive limits.* Nothing in this subpart is in derogation of the requirements of § 147.130 of this subchapter.

(g) *Coverage of emergency department services.* Emergency department services must be provided as follows:

(1) Without imposing any requirement under the plan for prior authorization of services or any limitation on coverage where the provider of services is out of network that is more restrictive than the requirements or limitations that apply to emergency department services received in network; and

(2) If such services are provided out-of-network, cost-sharing must be limited as provided in § 147.138(b)(3) of this subchapter.

[78 FR 12866, Feb. 25, 2013, as amended at 79 FR 30350, May 27, 2014]