



**Alaska
Pioneer
Homes**

Pharmacy Program

**Division of
Alaska Pioneer
Homes**

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**Alaska Department of Health
and Social Services**
Governor, Bill Walker
Commissioner, Valerie Davidson



Visit the Pioneer Homes Website at:

dhss.alaska.gov/daph

Pharmacy Program



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For answers to questions regarding the Alaska Division of Pioneer Homes programs, please call: **(907) 465-4416**

For answers to questions regarding costs and billing, please call our toll free number: **1-888-355-3117**

Benefit of the Pharmacy Program

The Pioneer Homes Pharmacy Program provides pharmaceuticals and pharmacist consultation for the residents of Alaska Pioneer Homes. The pharmacy and staff are located in the Anchorage Pioneer Home. Staff members include licensed pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and billing personnel.

Benefits of the Pharmacy Program

The Pioneer Homes Pharmacy Program includes several beneficial services:

1. Pharmacists and pharmacy staff work in conjunction with other staff members and are dedicated to serving the Pioneer Homes residents.

The primary benefit of having a single-source pharmacy program is to have on-staff pharmacists with knowledge, experience, background and interest in geriatric pharmacy. Prescriptions for Pioneer Homes residents are appropriately filled, packaged, and delivered daily. The Pioneer Homes pharmacists provide the following services:

- A. Clinical review of residents' medication regimens. Our pharmacists review all medications a resident takes to help ensure that risks of interactions and side effect are minimized.
- B. Communication with residents' healthcare providers concerning medication regimens.

- C. Overall quality assurance program.
- D. Staff education concerning medications.
- E. Resident/family education concerning medications.
- F. Community education to healthcare providers serving the Pioneer Homes regarding the Pioneer Home Pharmacy Program.

2. Greater efficiency and safety controls.

Prior to the implementation of the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy Program, a number of pharmacy sources were supplying medications to residents in many of the Pioneer Homes. This inevitably caused differences in the ordering, labeling, packaging, storage, and administration of medications. This fragmentation resulted in inefficiencies and potential safety problems. Solutions to these problems were found in the development of a single pharmacy that serves and supplies all six Pioneer Homes.

Resident Participation in the Pioneer Home Pharmacy Program

Anyone who resides in a Pioneer Home may purchase medications through the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy Program. The pharmacy may or may not provide medications to residents who administer their medications independently without any intervention, reminders, or follow up by staff.

However, all residents whose medications are administered to them by Pioneer Homes staff members or who are on the Payment Assistance Program are required to participate in the program. A single-source pharmacy is considered to be the safest and most efficient basis for medication administration throughout the Pioneer Homes.

Residents who wish to use an outside pharmacy, other than the Veterans Administration Pharmacy or Native Health Service Pharmacy will only be allowed to do so with the approval of the Pioneer Homes pharmacist.

A resident who chooses to use an outside pharmacy will be notified by the Pioneer Home about the increased risk for medication errors or complications from drug interactions when an outside pharmacy is utilized. The resident will be informed that this policy, which imposes conditions for using an outside pharmacy, is intended to reduce the risk of medication errors and prevent additional costs to the State of Alaska.

The Pioneer Homes will not refuse any resident assistance with medication administration.

Resident Responsibilities if Obtaining Medications from an Outside Pharmacy

1. The resident agrees to pay for all medications obtained through an outside pharmacy with the resident's available income after all Pioneer Homes charges have been met.
2. The Pioneer Homes will not subsidize the cost of medications obtained from an outside pharmacy.
3. Insurance recoveries are the responsibility of the resident.
4. The resident is responsible for ordering, procurement, and delivery of the medications from the outside pharmacy.
5. The pharmacy provider must agree to package medications in a way that is approved by the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy in order to reduce the risk of medication errors and protect the residents' right to a safe environment.
6. A resident using an outside pharmacy must also have an agreement with the outside pharmacist to participate in care plan counseling for the resident when deemed necessary by the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy.

Frequently Asked Questions

The following section presents the most frequently requested information:

1. How are prescriptions/medication orders filled by the pharmacy?

Prescriptions or medication orders are directly faxed to the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy by the prescribing health care professional or by a Pioneer Homes staff member using a toll-free fax number. Courier service is used to ship medications from the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy to the other Pioneer Homes.

Medications are delivered directly to the designated Pioneer Home staff members who are responsible for receiving and appropriately storing the resident's medications.

2. How are refills obtained?

All medications for which a refill has been prescribed are refilled by the pharmacy. Some medications are refilled automatically while others must be requested. Medications in tablet form, which are taken on a routine schedule, are automatically dispensed, per federal regulation, every 14 days by the pharmacy (effective 01/01/13). Medications taken only as needed or medications in non-tablet form such as liquids, eye drops, and patches, are dispensed by the pharmacy upon request from the designated Pioneer Home staff member. Staff members also monitor the resident's supply of medications and request medication refills from the pharmacy as needed.

3. How long does it take for medications shipped from the Pioneer Home Pharmacy to arrive?

Medications are shipped from the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy once each working day. Prescriptions, medication orders, or refill requests received after daily shipping has occurred are sent the next working day. It may take up to three working days for newly ordered medications to arrive at a Pioneer Home. In addition, if a newly ordered medication is not currently in stock at the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy and must be specially obtained prior to shipment, the order may take up to five working days to arrive at a Pioneer Home.

4. What happens when a resident requires a medication sooner than delivery can occur?

For medications needed immediately, prescriptions/medication orders can be partially filled from a stock supply of medications available at each Pioneer Home. If the medication is not available in the stock supply, it can be acquired at a local pharmacy.

5. Will prescriptions be filled with brand name medications or generic medications?

All prescriptions, when possible, are filled with the generic equivalent. Not all medications are available in a generic form. Some drugs are protected by patents or are supplied by a single company. In these instances, the prescription is filled with the brand name medication, but labeled generically.

6. What is the difference between a generic and a brand name drug?

Besides the name and price, there is very little difference. Generic drugs must be therapeutically equivalent. This means they contain the same chemical ingredient, have the same medical effect, and are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for substitution for brand name drugs.

7. Are generic drugs safe?

Yes. Both generic and brand name drugs are regulated by the FDA. Generic and brand name drugs are tested and approved in the same way. Manufacturers of generic medications must prove to the FDA that a product contains equal amounts of the same active ingredient, and that a generic equivalent has the same medical effect as its brand name counterpart.

8. How are over-the-counter medications obtained?

Pioneer Homes require a prescription for over-the-counter medications, and the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy provides these medications in the same manner as prescription medications. Requiring a prescription for over-the-counter medications helps to ensure that a resident's prescribing health care provider has approved all medications. Also, with this system, the Pioneer Homes pharmacists and staff are aware of each medication taken by a resident and can screen all medications for harmful side effects and interactions with other medications.

9. Does the pharmacy stock items such as herbal or homeopathic remedies?

The pharmacy stocks USP (United States Pharmacopeia) approved dietary supplements. The Pioneer Home System requires that the supplements are held to the USP standard to ensure the potency and purity of the product. In order for the nurse to administer these supplements to a resident, the doctor must write an order for the supplement and it must be obtained from the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy.

The Pioneer Homes Pharmacy has a Formulary List of all USP approved dietary supplements that are available from the pharmacy. If the resident wishes to use a dietary supplement that is not on the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy Formulary List, that supplement must have a doctor's order and the family is responsible for acquiring and administering it to the resident.

10. How does billing for medications occur?

Pioneer Homes residents are billed once a month. Pharmacy charges are included on the resident's monthly statement along with their rent and supplies charges. This provides the resident the convenience of making one payment each month. Payment can be made by check, Visa, or Mastercard. The monthly billing includes:

- A. A statement identifying charges for rent, supplies and, if the resident receives items from the Pioneer Home Pharmacy, pharmaceuticals. The pharmacy charges on the statement are the resident's responsibility to pay.

B. An itemized list of the individual pharmaceuticals dispensed during the month. This list is provided for information purposes and can be submitted to insurance companies for cost reimbursement. When the pharmacy bills insurance companies electronically, the charges on the itemized list are the resident's co-payment amounts. For all others, the charges on the itemized list are the total charges for each medication.

11. Does the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy bill insurance companies directly?

Currently, the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy has the capacity to electronically bill most major insurance plans/companies for medications distributed from the pharmacy. If any resident's insurance company is not available for electronic billing, the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy billing clerk will bill that insurance company by mail. To ensure the pharmacy is able to submit claims for reimbursement, it is important that a copy of both sides of the resident's insurance card is on file with the pharmacy. The pharmacy billing clerk needs the resident's insurance information card to properly bill insurance companies on behalf of the resident.

12. When are the statements mailed?

The statements are usually mailed on the last working day of each month.

13. Where should payment be sent?

An addressed envelope is enclosed with all statements.
Payments are mailed to:

Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes

Attention: Revenue Unit

PO Box 110690

Juneau, AK 99811-0690

For increased convenience, payments may also be deposited in the designated drop boxes located at each Pioneer Home.

To reach the Pioneer Homes Revenue Unit (Billing Office) call toll-free 1-888-355-3117

Toll-Free Information Number

For answers to any questions regarding the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy, medications, or pharmacy bills, please call the Pioneers Home Pharmacy during working hours: 7 a.m.-3 p.m., Mon. through Fri., closed Sat., Sun. and most state holidays. In Anchorage, please call (907) 343-7294. Outside Anchorage, please use the statewide toll-free number 1-888-546-7294.

E-mail

For answers to questions regarding the Pioneer Homes Pharmacy or medication questions that are not of an urgent nature, e-mail may be used. However, the telephone numbers above are generally the fastest way to receive information.

E-mail regarding medication/pharmacy questions may be sent to: **lanalondon.bell@alaska.gov** or

Billing questions may be sent to:
sheryl.casey@alaska.gov

Contact Information

**For further information
please contact The Pioneer Homes Central
Administrative Office at:**

Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes

dhss.alaska.gov/daph

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(907) 465-4416

Fax: (907) 465-4108

Anchorage

Pioneer Home

923 W. Eleventh Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 276-3414

Fairbanks

Pioneer Home

2221 Eagan Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 456-4372

Juneau

Pioneer Home

4675 Glacier Hwy
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 780-6422

Ketchikan

Pioneer Home

141 Bryant St.
Ketchikan, AK 99901
(907) 225-4111

Alaska Veterans & Pioneers Home

250 E. Fireweed Ave.
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 745-4241

Sitka

Pioneer Home

120 Katlian St.
Sitka, AK 99835
(907) 747-3213

Other important numbers:

Pioneer Home Revenue Unit (Billing Office)

Toll-free 1-888-355-3117

Pioneer Home Pharmacy

Toll-free 1-888-546-7294

This booklet is one of five providing
information about Alaska Pioneer Homes.
Other booklets in the series:

A Matter of Rights

Payment Assistance

Admissions & Discharge

About Our Homes

State of Alaska

Bill Walker, *Governor*

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

Valerie Davidson, *Commissioner*



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