Auditing is a critical component of responsible pharmacy benefit management. Prime manages a robust program to detect inaccurate payments, drug waste, and fraudulent claims or other benefit coverage abuses. As part of this program, Prime regularly samples and audits claims from pharmacies in our network.

While Prime takes great care to make audits fair and objective, there is still the potential for negative feelings to arise during an audit – especially if the errors require overpayments to be returned. This is why Prime has invested in making pharmacy audit practices easy to use and pharmacy-friendly.

**Simpler guidelines lead to stronger pharmacy relationships**
Prime saw the opportunity to turn audits — a source of potential antagonism — into a venue for collaboration with pharmacies.

We began by simply listening to concerns and seeking to demonstrate mutual respect and understanding. After hearing from pharmacies that recoveries felt punitive, we revised our recovery guidelines. Today, our audits seek only to recover the difference between what was actually paid and what should have been paid.

In addition, Prime will now accept prescriber attestations for commercial claims when the original prescription is unavailable. This is another positive change fueled by what we heard from pharmacies.

As has been our long-standing practice, Prime makes full disclosure of audit practices and results to pharmacies. If errors are found, the pharmacy is held accountable for correcting its policies and procedures. When overpayment recoveries are warranted, before deducting the amount owed from future payments, Prime gives the pharmacy the option to send a check for the appropriate amount. This openness gives pharmacies a clear view into audit results, makes them aware of excess payments they are accountable for refunding, and gives them control over how overpayments are returned.

Not only are these actions helping to reduce the pain of pharmacy audits, they are also serving as a foundation for stronger relationships with network pharmacies.

---

A fresh approach to audits
Revised audit guidelines are just the first step. Prime is executing a three-fold strategy to make pharmacy audits easier for all involved:

1. **Focusing on prevention.** The easiest way to potentially reduce audit recoveries is to investigate and solve problems before claims are paid.

2. **Increasing transparency and measurement.** Better collaboration gets better results; that's why Prime is seeking to enlist pharmacies as allies in pharmacy audit success.

3. ** Deploying new capabilities.** By expanding procedures, improving training, enhancing relationships, automating processes and implementing new technology, Prime is building a best-in-class auditing program.

**Clients and members benefit too**
Quite often, the pharmacy is the setting in which Prime’s relationship with members plays out. Since pharmacies play a critical role in delivering the best possible service to our members, it is in Prime’s best interest to maintain strong, collaborative pharmacy relationships. Easier, more open audits support positive interactions and reduce the sort of frustrations that might cause a pharmacist to complain to the plan — or worse yet — to members.

Good pharmacy relationships can also make the Prime’s business relationship with the pharmacy smoother and more efficient, allowing both to invest more energy into serving members.

**In conclusion**
Meeting the needs of our members is Prime’s highest priority. Pharmacy audit activities ultimately help us meet these needs by eliminating inefficiencies when identified and appropriate, reducing waste and preventing fraudulent or abusive actions that can drive up the cost of health care premiums.

Audits are a necessary component of responsible pharmacy benefit management. However, by improving our pharmacy audit procedures, Prime hopes to demonstrate that audits do not need to be a source of ongoing resentment between pharmacies and PBM's.

Prime’s collaborative audit approach is a natural extension of our commitment to **put people first.** Building more positive relationships with pharmacies allows Prime to focus on our fundamental mission: helping people get the medicine they need to feel better and live well.