United Healthcare to Settle HIV Mail-Order Meds Lawsuit

June 5, 2014

HIV-positive people may soon be able to opt out of United Healthcare's specialty mail-order pharmacy program, as a class action settlement against the nation's largest insurance provider enters into its final stages in court, according to a statement from the National AIDS Treatment Advocacy Project (NATAP).

The settlement, originally announced in March, seeks to reconcile the John Doe v. United Healthcare case, which alleges that the provider's OptumRX mail-order program for obtaining certain HIV meds violated both state and federal privacy and discrimination laws.

The final hearing for the case will take place on July 14. Barring any appeals, the settlement will go into full effect as early as this August. If that happens, United Healthcare will send out exemption notices to all its clients currently enrolled in the mail-order prescription program and will allow them to receive their HIV meds at any in-network retail pharmacy of their choosing.

HIV-positive people affected by the settlement may also be able to seek damages up to $240,000 for the excess insurance costs they paid as a result of the mail-order program.

In the meantime, those who want to opt out of the settlement (i.e., people filing their own lawsuits against United Healthcare) will have until June 23 to do so. In addition, anyone wanting to speak out or complain about the settlement in court must file an official request to do so by June 23.

For more information about the case and to check out updates on the status of the class action case, go to UnitedHIVSettlement.com or call (866) 212-1867.

To read the NATAP statement, click here. To read the settlement agreement, click here. To read our September 2013 feature story about mail-order meds, click here.

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