

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF RECOVERY ORIENTED SYSTEMS OF CARE  
PREVENTION POLICY # 01**

**SUBJECT:** Synar

**RE-ISSUED:** July 21, 2015

**EFFECTIVE:** July 21, 2015

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to specify Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHP) requirements with regard to federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant Synar compliance.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to Regional Substance Abuse Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs) and their Synar-related provider network, including Designated Youth Tobacco Use Representatives (DYTUR), which are part of substance abuse services administered through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Recovery oriented Systems of Care (MDHHS/OROSC).

**BACKGROUND:**

States must show compliance with federal requirements to be considered eligible for the SAPT Block Grant. States are also required to submit an annual report and an implementation plan with regard to Synar related activities. These requirements are incorporated in the annual SAPT Block Grant application. The state may be penalized up to 40 percent of the State's federal (SAPT) Block Grant award for non-compliance.

The Synar Requirements are summarized as follows:

- 1) States must enact a youth access to tobacco law restricting the sale and distribution of tobacco products to minors. The Michigan Youth Tobacco Act (YTA) satisfies this requirement by restricting the sale and distribution of tobacco products to minors.
- 2) States must actively enforce their youth access to tobacco laws.
- 3) The State must conduct a formal Synar survey annually, to determine retailer compliance with the tobacco youth access law and to measure the effectiveness of the enforcement of the law.
- 4) The State must achieve and maintain a youth tobacco non-sales rate of 80 percent or better to underage youth during the formal Synar survey.

In addition, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMHSA/CSAP) requires that an accurate listing of tobacco retail outlets be maintained, including periodic tobacco retail outlet coverage studies intended to confirm the accuracy of the list and establishes Synar sampling requirements.

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### **REQUIREMENTS:**

It is the responsibility of the PIHP to implement tobacco access prevention measures to achieve and maintain a youth tobacco non-sales rate of 80 percent or better within their region. In doing so, it is required that the PIHP will:

- 1) Use best practices relative to reducing access to tobacco products by underage youth;
- 2) Incorporate use of data specific to the PIHP region including youth sales data, analysis of the effectiveness of Synar related activities; and
- 3) Collaborate with local partners including law enforcement.

Activities associated with Synar best practices and other evidenced based prevention such as conducting inspections, and providing merchant or vendor education are defined as prevention services and must be carried out by a licensed substance abuse prevention program.

Specific responsibilities include the following:

- 1) Develop and implement a regional plan of Synar/tobacco prevention activity that will restrict youth access to tobacco and surpass the 80 percent non-sales rate.
- 2) Conduct activities necessary to ensure the Tobacco Retailer Master List is correct and participate in the clarification and improvement initiative, as well as the CSAP Mandated Coverage Study. Submit to OROSC all information as required by the OROSC/PIHP contract agreement.
- 3) Annually conduct and complete the Formal Synar Survey to all outlets in the sample draw listing during the designated time period and utilize the official OROSC protocol. Additionally, edit the survey compliance check report (CCR) forms and submit all required information to OROSC as required by the OROSC/PIHP contract agreement.
- 4) Contribute to enforcement of the Michigan YTA at tobacco outlets within the PIHP region by conducting non-Synar enforcement checks with law enforcement participation. If law enforcement involvement is not feasible, conduct non-Synar enforcement activity through civilian checks.

It is recommended that non-Synar checks be carried out in no less than 25 percent of the outlets in the PIHP region with priority to vendor categories that have historically had a higher sell rate to minors (e.g., Gas Stations, Bar/Lounges, and Restaurants).

For PIHPs with a 20 percent “sell rate” or Retailer Violation Rate (RVR) higher than 20 percent for two consecutive Synar surveys, the requirement is that no less than 50 percent of the outlets within the region will have at least one enforcement check activity during the subsequent third year

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**Note:** SAPT Block Grant funds cannot be used for law enforcement; this includes Formal Synar and non-Synar activities.

- 5) Conduct Vendor Education activities, utilizing the OROSC approved vendor education protocol, with not less than 25 percent of the total outlets within the PIHP region.
- 6) Seek to change community norms and conditions by forming relationships with stakeholders for the purposes of developing joint initiatives and/or for collaboration to impact sales trends to youth.
- 7) Identify a DYTUR agency to implement Synar-related activities. The agency or individual identified as the DYTUR, must have knowledge in the area of youth tobacco access reduction and related Synar prevention initiatives.
- 8) Provide information to satisfy federal reporting requirements including information about law enforcement activities relevant to violations of the YTA. Correspondingly, it is the responsibility of the PIHP to comply with Synar protocol, and demonstrate a good faith effort to, obtain and report this information. Documentation of good faith effort may be required if the PIHP cannot provide the required information.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

See the MDHHS/PIHP agreement for PIHP reporting requirements.

### **PROCEDURE:**

Identification and implementation of activities, and local data collection and evaluation procedures, are left to the discretion of the PIHP with the exception of the Formal Synar Survey Protocol (to be used for all enforcement checks), the Vendor Education Protocol, the Synar Tobacco Retailer Master List Clarification, and Improvement/Coverage Study Procedures complete with methodology and practices requirements. All associated protocols are placed on the OROSC website, and updated as needed.

Technical assistance to PIHPs in development of local procedures is available through OROSC .

### **REFERENCES:**

*Youth Tobacco Act 31 of 1915*, MCL1915 PA31, Michigan Legislature, 1915-1916 Legislative Session, Lansing, MI. (Amended September 1, 2006). Can be found on website:  
[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(c32puon1tgtsa355dn3zqljp\)/mileg.aspx?page=MCLPASearch](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(c32puon1tgtsa355dn3zqljp)/mileg.aspx?page=MCLPASearch)

**APPROVED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

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