

## PharmaNet Metadata

**Date Range: September 1, 1995 to present date, data is provided by calendar year**

**Data Source: BC Ministry of Health**

### Description

The PharmaNet system is an online, real-time system that captures all prescriptions for drugs and medical supplies dispensed from community pharmacies in BC as well as prescriptions dispensed from hospital outpatient pharmacies for patient use at home. In addition, physicians may record medications provided to patients during an office, clinic or emergency department visit. The recording of medications by physicians is not mandatory at this time; therefore this data is not complete.

PharmaCare is BC's public drug insurance program that assists BC residents in paying for eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies.

### Inclusions

- All drugs dispensed in BC
- Patient demographic data: Personal Health Number, name, address and date of birth, reported drug allergies
- Drug information and drug interaction evaluations
- PharmaCare and patient paid prescription claim information for drugs, dispensing fees, special services fees

### Exclusions

PharmaNet does **not** capture:

- Medications administered to patients when admitted to hospital
- Antiretroviral medications dispensed from the Centre of Excellence in HIV/Aids at St. Pauls Hospital
- Medications purchased without a prescription by the patient (e.g. Over the counter medications, herbal products, vitamins)
- Drugs dispensed to hospital in-patients
- Third party paid amounts

### Data Changes Over Time

- Until May 1, 2003, the PharmaCare program consisted of seven separate coverage plans<sup>1</sup>, the seniors and universal plan provided general benefits to individuals based on age, these plans were replaced by Fair PharmaCare in 2003. Complementary specialty plans were created to

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<sup>1</sup> Account level data only is released from PharmaNet, Account and Plan values are the same for all accounts with the exception of Fair PharmaCare, plan level data is not provided for Fair PharmaCare for privacy reasons due to the potential for determining family income.

**Note:** Seniors Plan (Account A) and Universal plan (Account E) were replaced by Fair PharmaCare on May 1, 2003.

provide specific benefits to eligible individuals based on economic need and disease. Specialty plan description;

- B – Long Term Care; provides 100% coverage for drug cost for individuals residing in a long term care facility. PharmaCare pays a monthly capitation fee to facility pharmacies in place of dispensing fees
  - C - Income Assistance; provides 100% coverage of eligible prescription costs for B.C. residents receiving medical benefits and income assistance through the [Ministry of Social Development](#).
  - D - Cystic fibrosis; provides 100% coverage for digestive enzymes and other products listed in the [Cystic Fibrosis Formulary](#) to individuals with cystic fibrosis who are registered with a provincial cystic fibrosis clinic.
  - F- Children at Home; provides 100% coverage of eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies for children receiving full benefits or medical benefits through the Ministry of Children and Family Development’s community-based, family-style care for severely handicapped children who would otherwise become reliant on institutional care.
  - G- No-Charge Psychiatric Medication Plan; provides 100% coverage of certain psychiatric medications to individuals of any age who are registered with a mental health services centre and who demonstrate clinical and financial need.
  - P – Palliative Care Plan; provides 100% coverage of medications used in palliative care for BC residents of any age who have reached the end stage of a life-threatening disease or illness and who wish to receive palliative care at home.
  - M- Medication Management Services Plan. Plan M covers individuals for eligible medication management services provided by pharmacies up to certain limits. Medication management services include clinical services such as prescription renewal and adaptation and medication reviews. Most patients taking 5 or more medications are eligible for medication review services.
  - S-Nicotine replacement therapies under the Smoking Cessation Program. Plan S covers nicotine replacement therapies for individuals eligible under the [Smoking Cessation Program](#). The Smoking Cessation Program also covers prescription smoking cessation medications according to the rules of the primary PharmaCare plan (that is, Plan B, Plan C, Plan G or Fair PharmaCare).
- On May 1, 2003 Fair PharmaCare was introduced which combined the Seniors (Plan A) and Universal (Plan E) plans into a series of plans with deductibles and copay amounts based on family net income.
  - Fair PharmaCare is based on family net income not individual net income. If a family has one high drug use family member, all members of the family could potentially meet the Fair PharmaCare deductible and copay ‘financial threshold’, providing that the high drug use item is defined as a PharmaCare benefit. Fair PharmaCare accumulated expenditure amount represents all out of pocket expenses for the ‘family’ not the ‘individual’. Out of pocket expenses for an individual, (copay to collect / patient paid amount) must be calculated for each calendar year by adding the copay to collect amount for each claim.

**NOTE:** PharmaNet does not capture information regarding third party coverage; as a result it is not apparent if the patient paid amount was paid by the patient or a third party insurer.

### Important Additional Information

- PharmaNet (as opposed to PharmaCare) is a province-wide network that links all BC pharmacies to a central set of data systems. It supports drug dispensing, drug monitoring and claims processing. The PharmaNet system contains data related to both medications dispensed and PharmaCare claims. All prescription medications dispensed by community pharmacies in BC are recorded in the PharmaNet system. Although the PharmaNet data is not part of the Population Data BC holdings at this time, it can be linked to data held by Population Data BC (see references below).
- Practitioner IDs in the PharmaCare data files held by Population Data BC are not currently linkable to the practitioner IDs in the PharmaNet data files.

### References

- More information on the PharmaCare program and the Fair PharmaCare plan is available on the BC Ministry of Health Services website at:  
<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/index.html#>.
- More information on PharmaNet is available at:  
<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/pharmanet/netindex.html>.
- Please contact Researcher Liaison for up-to-date information on how to apply for access to the PharmaNet data.

### Fields Available

Patient Information	
Field Name	Description
PHN	Personal Health Number used to identify residents of BC for the purposes of tracking health care treatments; prescription medications cannot be dispensed to an individual without a PHN, non-residents requiring prescription medications are assigned a 'temporary PHN'. The PHN is replaced by project specific patient identification study id.
Gender	Sex of the individual
Date of Birth (YYYYMMM)	Date individual was born, only year and month are approved for release from PharmaNet
Age	Age is typically calculated as of Jan 1 for each year of data released, alternative mechanisms to calculate age may be considered for studies involving infants
Health Authority (HA)	There are 4 health authorities that serve geographic regions in BC; Northern, Interior, Vancouver Island, Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health. <a href="http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/provmap.html">http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/provmap.html</a>
Local Health Area (LHA)	There are 91 LHAs in BC. <a href="http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/lhamap.asp">http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/lhamap.asp</a>
Other patient geographic information	Other geographical divisions from Statistics Canada (i.e. CMA, CSD, CD) could be requested, as well as researcher defined geographical units.

<b>Pharmacy Information</b>	
Pharmacy Identification Number	Pharmacy identification number (ID) is a unique identifier assigned by the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association. Pharmacy ID is replaced by a project-specific pharmacy study identification number.
Health Authority	There are 4 health authorities that serve geographic regions in BC; Northern, Interior, Vancouver Island, Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health. <a href="http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/provmap.html">http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/provmap.html</a>
Local Health Area	LHA is the lowest level of geographic data released by the PSC. There are 91 LHAs in BC. <a href="http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/lhamap.asp">http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/lhamap.asp</a>
Other pharmacy geographic information	Other geographical divisions from Statistics Canada (i.e. CMA, CSD, CD) could be requested, as well as researcher defined geographical units.
<b>Practitioner Information</b>	
Practitioner Identification Number	Unique identifier, license number assigned by the governing body with which the individual is registered. Replaced by a project-specific practitioner identification study number.
Health Authority (HA)	There are 4 health authorities that serve geographic regions in BC; Northern, Interior, Vancouver Island, Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health. <a href="http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/provmap.html">http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/provmap.html</a>
Local Health Area (LHA)	There are 91 LHAs in BC. <a href="http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/lhamap.asp">http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/lhamap.asp</a>
Other practitioner geographic information	Other geographical divisions from Statistics Canada (i.e. CMA, CSD, CD) could be requested, as well as researcher defined geographical units.
Practitioner ID Ref	Practitioner identification reference ( <i>code identifying the governing body from which practitioner receives their license</i> )
Practitioner Type	Describes type of medical work performed e.g., physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, podiatrist, midwife, veterinarian, pharmacist
Practitioner Specialty Flag	Y / N flag that identifies whether the practitioner is a specialist
Practitioner Specialty Description	Prescriber specialty information e.g., cardiology, neurology, paediatrics, psychiatry, respiratory, urology etc.
<b>Drug Information</b>	
DINPIN	The Drug Identification Number / Product Identification Number assigned by Health Canada, also referred to as Canadian Drug Identity Code (CDIC), is used to uniquely identify a particular drug by chemical, dosage, form and manufacturer
Canadian Brand Name	Name the product is marketed by in Canada
Chemical / Generic	Represents the chemical composition of a drug

Name	
GCN Sequence Number	Proprietary random number assigned by Health Canada that represents the generic formulation of drug
Drug Strength	Alpha numeric description of drug potency and units e.g., 75%, 70U
Drug Form Units	The drug measurement units for performing drug encounter and price calculations; e.g., ml, grams, each.
Dosage Form Code	Code identifying the form by which a drug is formulated; e.g., aerosol, foam, capsule, tablet, liquid.
Dosage Form Description	Describes the form by which a drug is formulated.
AHFS Code	American Hospital Formulary code assigned and maintained by Health Canada to group drugs by therapeutic categories
PharmaCare TheraClass	PharmaCare therapeutic class based on AHFS code, is assigned and maintained by PharmaCare to group drugs by therapeutic categories
<b>Medication Review</b>	
Medication Review Records	Pharmacists provided details about all drugs a patient is currently taking, possible adverse affects, recommendations, etc. Medication reviews are a service provided by pharmacists. Pharmacists can then claim these and be reimbursed for this extra service.
<b>Medication Dispensing Information</b>	
Date of Service	Date treatment, product or service was provided to the patient.
Quantity Dispensed	Quantity of medication dispensed
Days Supply	Estimate of number of days treatment contained in the dispense
<b>Claims or Cost Information</b>	
Date of Service	Date treatment, product or service was provided to the patient.
Account Code <sup>2</sup> and Description	Account type under which claim adjudicated, represents type of PharmaCare plan e.g., long term care, income assistance, cystic fibrosis, mental health, Fair PharmaCare.
Quantity	The actual number of units dispensed as submitted by the Pharmacist.
Quantity Accepted	Pro-rated quantity based on days supply accepted for payment by PharmaCare
Days Supply	Estimated number of days of treatment contained in the prescription as submitted by pharmacist
Days Supply Accepted	Pro-rated days supply based on the 'allowed' days supply. The 'accepted' days supply may be reduced from the submitted days supply based on: exceeding one of the following; patient's special authority days supply, amount allowed for the plan or amount allowed for

<sup>2</sup> Different accounts target specific sub-sets of the population. Fair PharmaCare plan level data is not provided for privacy reasons due to the potential for determining family income.

	the DINPIN.
Drug Cost Claimed	Ingredient cost claimed / submitted by the pharmacist
Drug Cost Accepted	Product cost that Pharmacare used to adjudicate the claim. If the product was in a Reference Based Price Category, or part of a Low Cost Alternative group of drugs, and the price charged for the drug was greater than the base-line cost established by Pharmacare, before adjudicating the claim the product cost is set to the appropriate base-line cost. Special Authorities may be given to have Pharmacare pay the entire price of the higher drug.
Drug Cost Paid	The amount of the submitted drug cost paid by PharmaCare.
Professional Fee	Dispensing fee cost claimed / submitted by the pharmacist for technical and professional services.
Professional Fee Accepted	Professional fee cost Pharmacare used to adjudicate the claim. If the Professional fee charged exceeded the maximum allowed for the BENEFITGRP or PHARMACY, before adjudicating the claim the professional fee is adjusted is set to the appropriate maximum allowed.
Professional Fee Paid	The amount of the dispensing fee cost amount paid by PharmaCare for technical and professional services.
Special Services Fee	The amount claimed by pharmacist for special service e.g., consulted prescriber, action Rx issue
Special Services Fee Paid	The amount paid by PharmaCare to the pharmacy for the special service e.g., consulted prescriber, action Rx issue
Copay to Collect	The amount the pharmacy collected from the patient for a claim. <b>Note:</b> PharmaNet does not track amounts paid by third party insurers, the copay to collect amount may be passed on to a third party.
Total Amount Paid	Total amount paid by PharmaCare to the pharmacy for drug cost and professional fee after adjusting for maximum price rules and subtraction of the copay to collect amount.
Special Authority Flag	Y / N Indicates whether or not a special authority was in effect at the time of the claim.
Special Authority Type	Represents the type of special authority in effect at the time of the claim e.g., B = non-benefit, L = low cost alternative (LCA) and R = reference drug program (RDP)
Accumulated Expenditure Amount	Total dollar amount spent by, or on behalf of the family since the start of the benefit year. The value includes expenditures up to but not including this claim. This amount is the cumulative total of the Accepted Amount but does not include the current claim.
Claim Status	Current status of the claim, reversal, or adjustment
Intervention Type Code	Identifies intervention codes for special services performed. Up to two Special Service Intervention codes are allowed per claim