



For British Columbia's PharmaNet Users

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The Ministry of Health Services would like to express its gratitude to all of the pharmacists, health service providers and support staff whose efforts ensured the efficient delivery of PharmaNet services over the weekend of January 7 – 9.

Your understanding, patience and commitment are appreciated by the Ministry and by the citizens you have dedicated yourselves to serving.

Thank you.

Overview

The BC Government began implementing changes to their computer systems' data centre over the January 7 – 9, 2011 weekend. Due to technical issues encountered during that changeover, further work is scheduled for the weekend of January 22 – 23.

As before, certain parts of the PharmaNet system will not be available during this changeover period.

PharmaNet service limitations will come into effect from Saturday January 22nd, 2011 at 1:00 am until Sunday January 23rd, 2011 at 5:00 pm.

In the unlikely event that the changeover period is extended, pharmacies will be notified by PharmaNet fan-out.

For your convenience, we are re-issuing the earlier guidelines in a simplified format.

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The use of PharmaNet is not intended as a substitute for professional judgment. Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and cannot be relied upon as complete. The absence of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate or effective in any given patient. Health care professionals should confirm information obtained from PharmaNet, and ensure no additional relevant information exists, before making patient care decisions.



Which patients will be affected

| Patient PHN status | Required action |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Patients who registered for Fair PharmaCare before January 21, 2011 and who can provide their PHN | No special action: patient records will be available and their dispensing will adjudicate as usual. |
| Patients who registered for PharmaCare on Friday, January 21 and who can provide you their PHN | Inform patients that they should contact HIBC to have their registration verified before their prescription claims can be adjudicated. |
| Patients who cannot provide their PHN | Carry out a name search to determine if they have already been assigned a PHN. Use the modified name search procedure below to find PHNs. Search results: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the patient has a PHN on record, dispense as usual.• If the patient has no PHN on record, assign a new PHN in the usual manner, then help patients who need temporary emergency assistance to register for coverage (see procedure details on page 3). |

Using the modified Name Search procedure to find PHNs

During the changeover period, PharmaNet name search capabilities are reduced, so it may be harder to determine whether patients have a previously-assigned Personal Health Number (PHN) in the PharmaNet records.

The procedure is a slightly modified version of the standard PHN search as set forth in the Pharmacare/PharmaNet Policies and Procedures Manual; we provide an adapted version here for your convenience and to improve search results.

Step 1 – Search your local system records

- If you find their PHN and confirm their identity, you can proceed with dispensing in the usual fashion.
- If you have no record of their PHN, search PharmaNet.

Step 2 – Search the PharmaNet system

Conduct a name search on PharmaNet by entering **ALL of the following patient information:**

- **full last name, AND;**
- **full or partial given name, AND;**
- **gender, AND;**
- **year of birth (but do not enter the day and month).**

Matching records will be returned. If no match is found OR if more than 25 matches are found, the system will display error message “108 No matches found for selection criteria chosen.”

- If you find a matching record, dispense the prescription in the usual fashion.
- If no match is found, repeat the search two more times, using the [search tips](#) on page 4.
- If further searches yield no match, assign the patient a new PHN in the usual fashion.

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Helping patients register for coverage during the changeover

Some patients to whom you assign a new PHN may be eligible for immediate coverage of their prescription costs because:

- they are already registered for one or more of PharmaCare's plans but you have been unable to find their record, OR
- they would be immediately eligible to have all or part of the prescription costs covered as soon as they registered for PharmaCare (e.g., qualified for no-deductible Fair PharmaCare coverage, Plan C or Plan G coverage).

The Ministry is committed to ensuring that patients who are in financial need get their prescriptions during the outage period.

To ensure that patients get the coverage they would normally be entitled to, you will have to provide them with a few simple instructions and contact information so they can register.

Steps to take

After you have assigned a PHN to the patient but before you dispense the prescription, use your local system to determine the cost of the medication. Inform the patient that they are responsible for paying this cost, but the cost will be applied to their Fair PharmaCare deductible and may result in a reimbursement.

- If the patient agrees to pay for the prescription, process the prescription claim in the usual fashion.
- If the patient indicates they are unable to pay for the prescription:
 - Inform them that they may be eligible for emergency temporary coverage if
 - they are a BC resident or are a non-resident who is receiving emergency social assistance (such as short-term hardship benefits) from a BC Ministry, AND
 - they register with PharmaCare by telephone.
 - Explain that the registration process will only take a few minutes and is effective immediately.
 - Provide them with their newly-assigned PHN and the HIBC Help Desk contact information (phone numbers 1-800-663-7100 outside the Lower Mainland or 604-683-7151 for the Vancouver area).
 - Let the patient know that once they have registered, they should return to your pharmacy to have the prescription filled. Doing this helps to ensure that the transaction will adjudicate correctly.
 - Inform the patient that the dispense will allow a three-day supply of medication and submit the transaction.

Note: PharmaCare will audit days' supply of medication dispensed on a temporary emergency basis during the changeover period. Some prescriptions, such as creams cannot be provided in three-day amounts; in such cases, provide the smallest amount that is possible.

HIBC will inform patients that they must register for Fair PharmaCare before any further prescriptions can be covered. HIBC will know that the patient has temporary coverage that includes only three days' worth of drugs.

Regular online and telephone registration services will resume on Monday, January 24, 2011.

References

For further details on carrying out name searches, refer to Sections 2.3 and 2.4.1-2 of the Pharmacare/PharmaNet Policies and Procedures Manual at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/generalinfo/policy/pharmacypractices.pdf.

For further details on assigning a new PHN, refer to Section 2.4.3 – Assigning a PHN.

Name Search Tips and Techniques

Basic Name Search Tips

- In the initial search, do NOT enter date or month of birth if uncertain; if they are incorrect, a “No match found” message is returned. Use the full date of birth only when narrowing a search that has returned multiple results.
- If the given name could have been entered in a number of ways, enter a partial given name with 1 to 14 characters to cast a wider search (e.g., Al will return Alan, Allan, Allen and Alyn). Then use the full name to narrow the results.
- Use patient address information only to narrow a search that has returned multiple results, but do not do so unless you are sure it's an exact match to the information in PharmaNet.

Advanced Name Search Tips

- Ask the patient for their full legal name(s) as they appear on their Social Insurance Number (SIN) card, driver's licence or other official document.
- Ask if the patient has changed their last name (e.g., married or divorced).
- Ask if the patient has a hyphenated name (e.g., with spouse's name).
- Check for embedded spaces in the last name (e.g., van der Ham vs. Vanderham).
- Search under the patient's first or second initial and surname.
Note: Many patients appear under their initials only.
- Search under the patient's full middle name.
Note: Some patients use their middle name as their common name.
- Check whether the patient uses a nickname, which might begin with a different letter, and try different spellings on the given name.
Note: For example, Robert may be entered as Bob, Robbie, Bobby etc.; Chris may be Christopher, Christophe or even Krystof.
- Try closely related names (e.g., Mac vs. Mc or St vs. Ste or Saint).
- Switch the patient's first or second name with their surname.
Note: Changing the order of names is a common data-entry error, especially for patients from cultural backgrounds in which the family name traditionally comes first.
- For people with only one legal name, search with that name in both the Last Name and Given Name fields or, if that does not work, with the one name in the Last Name field and a title (e.g., Mr) in the Given Name field.
- For newborns who have not yet been named, put in the first name of the newborn as “Baby Girl” or “Baby Girl A” or “Baby Boy” or “Baby Boy A.”
- If possible, contact the prescriber and ask them for the patient's PHN.