

BC

# PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

Special edition April 18, 2023

The PharmaCare Newsletter team works from the territory of the Lekwungen People, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. Our gratitude extends to them, and all Indigenous Peoples on whose territories and lands we build relationships.

BC PharmaCare counts on pharmacies and device providers to practice cultural safety and humility. To learn more, read Coming Together for Wellness, a series of articles by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and PharmaCare, and consider taking the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety course.

The PharmaCare Newsletter is published by the Pharmaceutical, Laboratory & Blood Services Division to provide information to B.C.'s healthcare providers.

[www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarepharmacists](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarepharmacists)  
[www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacareprescribers](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacareprescribers)  
[www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacaredeviceproviders](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacaredeviceproviders)



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## Minor Ailments and Contraception Service: Education resources

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The B.C. Minor Ailments and Contraception Service (MACS) is expected to launch on June 1, 2023. Educational and resource materials are now available to help pharmacists prepare for this scope expansion.

### medSask

medSask's "Minor ailment and self-care guidelines" can now be accessed for free by all pharmacists and pharmacy students in B.C. through the [BC Pharmacy Association \(BCPhA\) website](#). These guidelines provide treatment algorithms and patient assessment and treatment checklists for each condition.

medSask can be accessed with a BCPhA login. If you don't have one, [sign up for a complimentary BCPhA account](#). A BCPhA membership is **not** required.

Please note that medSask materials may not reflect the standards, limits and conditions set out by the College of Pharmacists of BC, or requirements for funding as determined by the B.C. Ministry of Health.

### UBC

Free accredited clinical education modules on several minor ailment conditions are now available to licensed B.C. pharmacists through UBC's Continuing Pharmacy Professional Development program (CPPD). To access these resources, visit the [UBC Canvas course catalog](#).

### ...and more to come

These training resources will be made available before June 1:

- An educational module to support pharmacists' understanding of the regulatory changes and requirements (College of Pharmacists of BC)
- An orientation module on prescribing for minor ailments and contraception, with a B.C.-specific focus on PharmaCare and practice requirements (BCPhA)

Also, accredited content on contraception and smoking cessation will be available in summer 2023 from UBC.

The Ministry will provide links and further information about these offerings on the [MACS web page](#) and in the [PharmaCare Newsletter](#). Subscribe to receive notifications of updates to the MACS web page (in the upper right corner of the page).

Pharmacists are encouraged to seek out other education opportunities and resources to help prepare for their participation in MACS.

## MACS survey for the public

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A public online survey about MACS was launched on April 12 and is open until April 30.

The [online survey](#) is linked from the top of the BC PharmaCare landing page: [www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare) and can be accessed directly via the QR code on the next page.

Please share the survey link with clients so they can provide valuable input for the coming service. Alternatively, save and print the image below and post it at the pharmacy counter.



## Drug administration fee update and reminders

PharmaCare introduced the [drug administration fee](#) in October 2022, alongside an expansion of the drugs pharmacists can administer. Since then, B.C. pharmacists have adeptly integrated drug administration into their services. Read on for an update about drug administrations and some reminders about claiming the fee.

### Update

B.C. pharmacists completed **44,756** drug administrations between October 14, 2022, when the drug administration fee was implemented, and December 31, 2022.

The top 3 drugs administered by pharmacists in that time were Shingrix, Prevnar 20, and Gardasil 9 (private supply). Together, these accounted for more than 60% of all drugs administered in the pharmacy.

### Reminders

#### SIG field

We are pleased to report that the SIG field is being completed correctly about 95% of the time. To further improve accuracy, we would like to remind pharmacists that:

- The administration fee can only be claimed when the administration is done [in a pharmacy](#)
- The administration fee can only be claimed for administering [private supply](#) vaccines, not public supply
- The SIG field for the administration fee claim must include the drug's DIN and generic name, the route and the site of administration, like this: `DIN_genericname_route_site`

*Do not enter any other information in the SIG.*

Example of correct SIG entry

- 1987003\_VitB12\_IM\_LEFT

Examples of incorrect SIG entries – **please don't do these!**

- 4737P\_SHINGIRX\_LEFT
- ADMINISTERED BY PHARMACIST
- RIGHT DELTOID LOT FK942 EXP. 11/2024
- 250-555-1234 JANE SMITH ACME PHARMACY
- INJECTION FEE

### Ineligible drugs

Drugs that are not eligible for the administration fee include insulins, low molecular weight heparins (LMWH), products designed for patient self-injection (such as GLP-1 agonists), publicly funded vaccines, and vaccines indicated for travel. Even if a prescriber writes “for injection by a pharmacist” on the prescription, the drug administration fee cannot be claimed for an ineligible drug.

Examples of ineligible drugs:

- Publicly funded vaccines (e.g., TD Adsorbed (Rx Inj), Gardasil 9 (Rx Inj)): PharmaCare pays \$12.10 for administering publicly funded vaccines when claimed under the [appropriate PIN](#)
- Travel vaccines such as YF-VAX, Typhim VI, and IXIARO: Only indicated for travel
- Ozempic®/semaglutide: Indicated for patient self-injection
- Innohep®/tinzaparin: LMWH indicated for patient self-injection
- Twinrix may or may not be eligible, depending on indication

Twinrix is the fifth-most common pharmacist-administered drug. If patients meet the criteria for a publicly funded hepatitis A or hepatitis B vaccine (or both), they should be informed of the options available to them at no cost. For patients who meet the “recommended but not provided free in B.C.” criteria, the drug administration fee can be claimed for Twinrix. If these patients have it indicated for travel, however, it is not eligible for the fee. Refer to the [BCCDC immunization manual](#) for an explanation of the criteria.

With patient consent, ineligible drugs may be injected in the pharmacy and billed directly to the patient.

### Pre-filled syringes

Pre-filled syringes intended to be administered by a health care professional are eligible for the drug administration fee. The product monograph will provide details about administration, such as, for example, “for administration by a health care provider” or “drug is intended for patient self-injection,” or it may simply provide instructions for patient self-injection.

## Resources

- [Quick reference guide to PharmaCare claims procedures](#)
- [PINs for publicly funded vaccines](#)
- [BCCDC Immunization Manual: Criteria for public coverage](#)

## Contraceptives coverage updates

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As of April 1, 2023, PharmaCare covers the full cost of **many** contraceptives for B.C. residents. **Not all** contraceptives available in Canada are eligible for full coverage.

The full list of covered contraceptives, with DINs and PINs and benefit status, is available at [Free contraceptives—information for health professionals](#).

### PINs for copper IUDs

Please ensure that the copper IUD files in your local system have the correct PINs to get coverage for patients.

### Information for the public

A [contraceptives information sheet \(PDF\)](#) and [poster \(PDF\)](#) are available to print and post in your pharmacy. Place them somewhere clients can see them and scan the QR code. The QR code will take people directly to the [Free contraceptives web page \(www.gov.bc.ca/contraceptives\)](#) that has the full list of covered contraceptives.

We encourage pharmacists to discuss full benefit options with people who are on non-benefit or partially covered products. Not all products have an interchangeable option, but many are eligible for pharmacist adaptation, or options can be discussed with the original prescriber. A table showing oral contraceptive options and their PharmaCare coverage status can be found at [Free contraceptives—information for health professionals](#).

### Emergency contraceptives pick-up

The Ministry is developing a policy to address the matter of someone picking up emergency contraception for another person. Information that had appeared previously in this section has been removed while the policy is finalized.