

# Drug Coverage Decision for B.C. PharmaCare

## About PharmaCare

B.C. PharmaCare is a government-funded drug plan. It helps British Columbians with the cost of eligible prescription drugs and specific medical supplies.

## Details of Drug Reviewed

<b>Originator</b>	<b>Etanercept</b>	
Brand Name	Erelzi™	Brenzys™
Dosage Form(s)	50 mg/mL solution for injection prefilled auto-injector, 50 mg/mL solution for injection prefilled syringe, 25 mg/0.5 mL solution for injection prefilled syringe	50 mg/mL solution for injection in a pre-filled syringe and pre-filled auto-injector
Manufacturer	Sandoz Canada Inc.	Merck Canada Inc.
<b>Submission Type</b>	<b>New Submission</b>	
Use Reviewed	Plaque Psoriasis in adults	
Common Drug Review (CDR)	No, CDR did not review	
Provincial Review	In June 2019 the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) provided confirmation to Sandoz that a CDR submission for Erelzi and Brenzys for the new indication of psoriatic arthritis is not required; as such, a full Drug Benefit Council (DBC) review is not required and the Ministry's drug coverage decision will be based on an internal review only.	
<b>Drug Coverage Decision</b>	<b>Limited Coverage Benefit</b> Access the etanercept criteria from <a href="http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarespecialauthority">www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarespecialauthority</a>	
Date	<b>April 7, 2021</b>	
Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Canada's review concluded that the etanercept biosimilars were similar to and had no clinically meaningful differences from the biologic reference drug, Enbrel®, with respect to efficacy, safety, pharmacokinetics, and immunogenicity.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results from a CADTH Rapid Response evaluating switching from the biologic reference to biosimilars suggested that switching from Enbrel to etanercept biosimilars can be performed safely with no impact on drug efficacy and clinical response.</li> <li>• Based on submitted product price, the etanercept biosimilars cost significantly less than the biologic reference drug.</li> <li>• BC participated in the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance (pCPA) negotiations that concluded agreements with the two drug manufacturers for the biosimilars.</li> </ul>
<p>Other Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On April 7, 2021, all new Special Authority (SA) requests including renewals for etanercept to treat plaque psoriasis will only be approved for Brenzys or Erelzi.</li> <li>• On <b>April 7, 2021</b> the six-month transition period will start, which means patients with existing PharmaCare coverage for Enbrel to treat plaque psoriasis, and wish to maintain their coverage must, in consultation with their prescriber, switch to either Brenzys or Erelzi by October 6, 2021.</li> <li>• During the transition period, both Enbrel and its biosimilar products will be covered for patients with existing etanercept SA approval for the treatment of plaque psoriasis, with no new request required for coverage of the biosimilar until the next SA renewal date. To maintain patients' coverage, prescribers must write a new prescription for their patients on Enbrel, indicating the transition to a specific biosimilar.</li> <li>• On October 7, 2021 coverage for Enbrel comes to an end for plaque psoriasis and only the approved biosimilar products are authorized for continued coverage. In phase 1 of the Biosimilar Initiative (May 2019), PharmaCare-covered patients who used Enbrel to treat rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, or psoriatic arthritis were switched over to Brenzys or Erelzi.</li> <li>• Additional information is available online at <a href="http://www.gov.bc.ca/biosimilars/">www.gov.bc.ca/biosimilars/</a></li> </ul>

### The Drug Review Process in B.C.

A manufacturer submits a request to the Ministry of Health (Ministry).

An independent group called the [Drug Benefit Council \(DBC\)](#) gives advice to the Ministry. The DBC looks at:

- whether the drug is safe and effective
- advice from a national group called the [Common Drug Review \(CDR\)](#)
- what the drug costs and whether it is a good value for the people of B.C.
- ethical considerations involved with covering or not covering the drug
- input from physicians, patients, caregivers, patient groups and drug submission sponsors

The Ministry makes PharmaCare coverage decisions by taking into account:

- the existing PharmaCare policies, programs and resources
- the evidence-informed advice of the DBC
- the drugs already covered by PharmaCare that are used to treat similar medical conditions
- the overall cost of covering the drug

Visit [The Drug Review Process in B.C. - Overview](#) and [Ministry of Health - PharmaCare](#) for more information.

**This document is intended for information only.**

It does not take the place of advice from a physician or other qualified health care provider.