

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

Drug	infliximab
Brand Name	Avsola™
Dosage Form	100 mg powder for solution for infusion in a single-use vial
Manufacturer	Amgen Canada Inc.
Submission Type	New Submission
Use Reviewed	For the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, psoriatic arthritis, and plaque psoriasis
Common Drug Review (CDR)	As of June 1, 2019, the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) no longer reviews biosimilars as their existing process may delay access to these products, and to deploy its limited resources to reviews of other drugs.
Provincial Review	PharmaCare also no longer asks the Drug Benefit Council (DBC) to review biosimilars, as Health Canada's biosimilar reviews are thorough and do not compromise efficacy and patient safety; therefore, Pharmacare reviewed Avsola internally.
Drug Coverage Decision	Limited Coverage Benefit. Access the infliximab criteria from www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarespecialauthority
Date	February 18, 2021
Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avsola was similar to the originator infliximab product (Remicade®) with respect to pharmacokinetics, efficacy, safety, and immunogenicity. • Based on economic considerations and the submitted product price, the drug was cost effective and offered value for money.
Other Information	Additional information on biosimilars and the Biosimilars Initiative are available online at www.gov.bc.ca/biosimilars/

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.