

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	nusinersen
Brand Name	Spinraza®
Dosage Form	Solution for intrathecal injection 2.4mg/mL
Manufacturer	Biogen Canada Inc.
Submission Type	Modification of Criteria
Use Reviewed	Treatment of adult type 2 and type 3 spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) patients older than 18 years of age regardless of ambulatory status
CADTH Reimbursement Review (CRR)	CRR recommended: Do Not Reimburse . Visit the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) website for more details: https://www.cadth.ca/sites/default/files/DRR/2022/SR0713-Spinraza-Reassessment.pdf
Provincial Review	Nusinersen was reviewed internally and was not reviewed by the Drug Benefit Council (DBC) because the CRR recommended not to list for the treatment of adult type 2 and type 3 SMA patients older than 18 years of age regardless of ambulatory status.
Drug Coverage Decision	Non-Benefit
Date	December 15, 2022
Reason	Decision is consistent with CRR recommendation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no randomized trials evaluating the efficacy or safety of nusinersen in the treatment of adult patients with type 2 or 3 SMA. Four observational studies were conducted but due to methodological limitations, it was not possible to establish causality between nusinersen and the observed improvements and maintenance of physical functioning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on economic considerations and the submitted product price, the drug was not cost effective and did not offer optimal value for money. • The pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance (pCPA) decided not to negotiate collectively or individually at the provincial-territorial level with the manufacturer of nusinersen for this indication.
Other Information	None

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 Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH)
- 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.