

How to Search for a Personal Health Number (PHN) in PharmaNet

Please make every effort to obtain a client's Personal Health Number (PHN). The correct PHN is vital to a person's care.

If a client does not have a BC Services Card or is not a resident of B.C., ask if they have:

- Lived in B.C. previously (after 1995)
- Filled a prescription in B.C., or used a public B.C. health service (including as a non-resident/visitor) (after 1995)

If they answer yes to either question, they probably have a PHN.

Request identification with the person's name and date of birth (DOB).

Use the PharmaNet Name Search (TPN) and enter their first and last name, gender and DOB.

If there are no matches

Make sure that the ID belongs to the client.

Confirm first and last names.

Ask if the client:

- Has changed their last name or marital status
- Has a hyphenated last name
- Has spaces in the last name (e.g., van der Ham)
- Uses their middle name as a first name
- Uses a nickname, English version, or alternative spelling of their first name (e.g., Bob for Robert)

Try this:

- Enter initial of first name / nickname instead of full name
- Switch first and last name, or middle and last name
- Search closely related names (e.g., Mac vs. Mc)
- If searching for a newborn, use "baby" as the first name and/or ask if they may be registered under a different surname
- Confirm the DOB, with attention to the year. PharmaNet only returns results for the year entered

If there are several PHNs for the same person

Use full name and address to determine the exact match

- Still no exact match: Ask if client lived at any of the addresses
- Still several matches: Contact PharmaCare Help Desk to request a merge. They'll let you know which PHN to use in the meantime

Out-of-date or incorrect information

- Update address with TPA transaction (Update Patient Address)
- If the name, gender or DOB on the client's ID is different from the one on file for the PHN, advise the client to call us at 1-800-663-7100

When filling a prescription for an animal, use the animal owner's PHN. Enter the veterinarian's licence number as the Pract ID, and Ref code V9. PHNs are assigned only to humans.



No luck? Contact the physician to get the PHN.

Still no luck? Call the PharmaCare Help Desk.



If you need help, contact the PharmaCare Help Desk or review Section 3.3., PharmaCare Policy Manual www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarepolicy

Claims submitted with pharmacy-assigned PHNs are not covered (unless the client already has PharmaCare coverage / PHN).