



For British Columbia's PharmaNet Users

**ALERT:****Potential for dosing errors with pre-filled multiple unit dose syringes**

Health Canada issues one DIN per drug entity. This introduces the potential for dosing errors with pre-filled syringes that contain the same concentration of the drug but have varying amounts of drug in each syringe (e.g., a drug at 2% concentration in 0.2mL, 0.4mL, or 0.6mL sizes).

For instance, **pre-filled dalteparin (Fragmin) syringes** come in 5000 IU, 7500 IU, 10,000 IU, 12,500 IU, 15,000 IU and 18,000 IU dosages but are all identified with the same DIN (02132648) and appear in the PharmaNet system by default as 5,000 IU per 0.2mL.

This could lead to dosing errors. Other practitioners, especially Emergency Department physicians and hospital pharmacists, rely on the information in the PharmaNet profile when determining what doses the patient has already had and what doses to re-prescribe.

**Preventing one-DIN-per-drug-entity dosing errors**

To prevent dosing errors, pharmacists should:

**Restate the dose and syringe size in the SIG field for display on PharmaNet (e.g., inject one 0.6mL syringe 15,000 IU).**

**Ensuring the dosage information displays properly**

The display size of the SIG field on PharmaNet is **only 80 characters long**, which may be much smaller than a pharmacy's local system. If dosage information is added *after* other information in the SIG field, it may not be visible to other PharmaNet users.

To ensure the dosage information appears on everyone's display, **place dosage information at the beginning of the field.**

**Note:** Health Canada's one-DIN-per-drug-entity policy may affect other drugs marketed in unit dose syringes or packs of the same concentration but varying volumes. Pharmacists should follow the same best practice of always:

- re-stating the exact dose in the SIG field for other affected DINs
- ensuring doses are confirmed in hospital and clinical settings before new orders are written and filled.

The use of PharmaNet is not intended as a substitute for professional judgment. Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and cannot be relied upon as complete. The absence of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate or effective in any given patient. Health care professionals should confirm information obtained from PharmaNet, and ensure no additional relevant information exists, before making patient care decisions.