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AVAILABILITY OF PANDEMIC H1N1 VACCINE BETWEEN NOW AND FALL 2010

Adjuvanted vaccine



As noted in the [Health Canada advisory](#) dated April 9, 2010, the provisional expiry date for unused adjuvanted pandemic H1N1 (pH1N1) vaccine (Arepanrix®) was shortened by 12 months. This revision was not safety-related, but due to a decline in the strength of the H1N1 antigen in specific lots. As stated by Health Canada, all vaccinations performed to date using adjuvanted pH1N1 vaccine have provided patients with a sufficient immune response against pH1N1 infection.

Until the end of May, physicians and pharmacists had been able to order unused adjuvanted vaccine with a revised expiry date of May 31, 2010 through the public health unit of the health authority as usual. **No unexpired adjuvanted pH1N1 vaccine is available in BC after May 31, however unadjuvanted vaccine remains available.**

**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.**

Unadjuvanted vaccine

The revision in the provisional expiry date of adjuvanted pH1N1 vaccine does not affect the unadjuvanted product (i.e., the expiry date for the unadjuvanted product remains as stated on the supply). BC physicians and pharmacists still have access to the remaining 70,000 doses of unadjuvanted pH1N1 vaccine in BC. The monograph for the unadjuvanted vaccine provides information on the considerations and limitations for use in various age groups and is available at: www.hls.gov.bc.ca/pho/pdf/pandemic/unadjuvanted_h1n1_product_leaflet.pdf

It is anticipated that the unadjuvanted seasonal trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV) will contain pH1N1 antigen as a component. This seasonal TIV is expected to be available near the end of September for the regular influenza season.

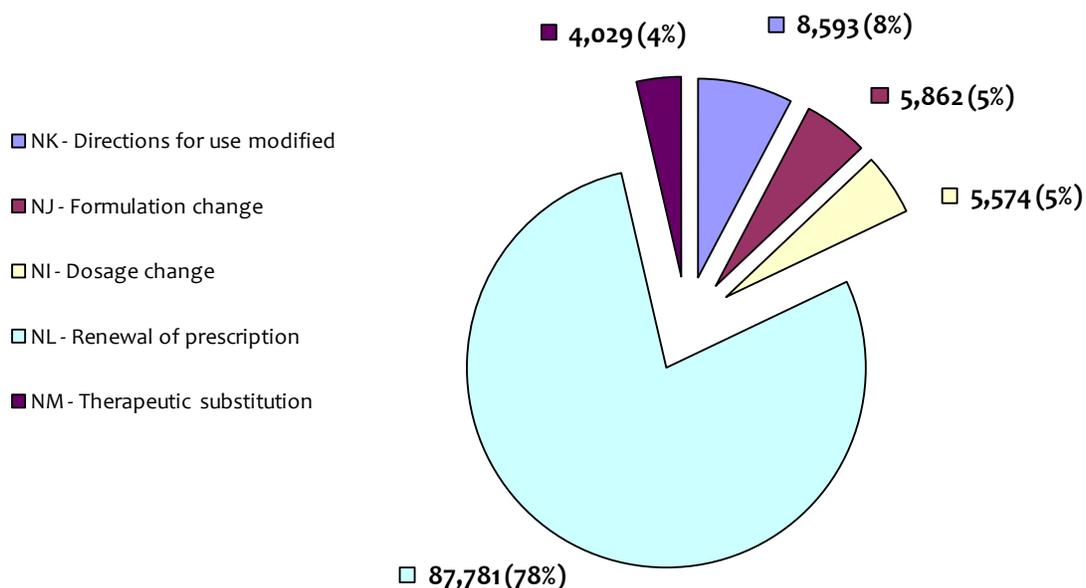
Expected H1N1 Activity before Fall 2010 and Patient Care

According to Canadian expert opinion, the likelihood of a third pandemic wave attributable to pH1N1 prior to this fall is low, although sporadic cases of pH1N1 continue to occur and small localized outbreaks are possible in under-immunized or non-immune communities. Although it is impossible to predict, an early fall wave of pH1N1 virus is also possible given the atypical seasonality this virus has demonstrated to date.

Therefore, if physicians and pharmacists have susceptible high-risk patients who have not yet received a pH1N1 vaccine, they may wish to discuss with them the option of receiving a dose of vaccine. The definition of susceptible high risk patients was included in previous Ministry communications and is provided in the HealthLink BC file at www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/pdf/hfile108b.pdf.

NUMBER OF CLINICAL SERVICES FEES PAID

Total Clinical Services Fees Paid January 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010: 111,839



PROSTHETIC & ORTHOTIC PROGRAM — NEW FORMS AND FINANCIAL CONTROLS

New Application for Financial Assistance Forms



New Prosthetic and Orthotic *Application for Financial Assistance* forms are now available on the PharmaCare website. Effective **June 17, 2010**, health care providers will be required to use the new forms to apply for financial assistance for prosthetic and orthotic patients.

These new forms are available on the PharmaCare website at:
www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/suppliers.html.

Detailed instructions are provided to help health care providers complete the required information. This will promote faster and more efficient processing of the applications.

The revised forms will allow the Prosthetic and Orthotic Program to:

- determine the basic mobility needs for each patient;
- make benefit decisions that are accurate and consistent;
- ensure the patient receives appropriate medical attention;
- improve accountability for all decisions and expenditure of public funds;
- maintain the sustainability of the program; and,
- provide responses to applications in a reasonable time.

Introduction of Financial Controls for Pre-Approvals

Effective **June 17, 2010**, the Pharmaceutical Services Division will also implement a new “financial control” within PharmaNet. This financial control will allow a health care provider to make an online claim within the six month pre-approval period for an approved prosthetic or orthotic application.

Some items will not be affected by this financial control. Those items are: prosthetic and orthotic supplies, repairs and adjustments under \$400 made against the appropriate Product Identification Numbers (PINs), and all mastectomy products and supplies that do not currently require pre-approval.

If you are a prosthetics and orthotics supplier and have not received the detailed letter regarding this new financial control, please contact Business Management and Supplier Relations at 250 952-2218.

New Detailed Policy and Procedures Document

In 2007, an external review recommended that Prosthetic and Orthotic Benefits Program be guided by a clearly defined, publicly accessible, comprehensive policy framework.

Consistent with this recommendation, Pharmaceutical Services Division developed a [General Statement of Program Policy](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/suppliers.html) and is now providing a detailed policy and procedures document. On or before June 1, 2010, the *Detailed Policy and Procedural Requirements* will be available on the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/suppliers.html.

This new document consolidates current policy and practice into a single, accessible document. It replaces the current *Supplement for Prosthetic/Orthotic Suppliers* posted on the PharmaCare website as part of the *PharmaCare/PharmaNet: Policies and Procedures* manual.

CLAIMS FOR NEEDLES AND SYRINGES – AUDIT UPDATE

PharmaCare covers needles and syringes only for diabetic patients who are insulin-dependent.

In mid-April, the Ministry of Health Services sent audit letters to 214 pharmacies. The audit focused on determining if claims submitted on PharmaNet were for needles and syringes required by insulin-dependent diabetic patients. The audit was based on data for patients on insulin that was transmitted on PharmaNet and was a PharmaCare benefit.

The ministry asked pharmacies to respond within 30 days if the recovery amount identified in the letter was incorrect.

Since that time, many pharmacists have responded. Some confirmed the recovery amount while others advised the ministry that only some of their claims for needles and syringes were for patients who were not insulin-dependent. These pharmacists are asked to respond to the letter within the 30-day time period.

As a result of feedback from pharmacies, the ministry's audit team is reviewing full data which accounts for all patients with claims for insulin whether or not the insulin was a PharmaCare benefit.

As soon as this review is completed, the ministry will send a letter to confirm recoveries from appropriate pharmacies.

If you have received a letter from the ministry and believe your pharmacy's claims are valid, please contact PharmaCare Audit at (250) 952-1436.

The ministry apologizes for any confusion to pharmacies whose claims adhered to PharmaCare policy.

Did you know?

Many prescribers are exempt from submitting Special Authority requests for specific drugs

A prescriber may have exemption from completing Special Authority request forms for Limited Coverage drugs for a number of reasons. When an exempt physician prescribes a drug for which they have a valid exemption, additional Special Authority approval is not required.

*For example, exemptions for **gastroenterologists** include lansoprazole (Prevacid®), omeprazole (Losec®), rabeprazole (Pariet®), pantoprazole magnesium (Tecta®) and pantoprazole sodium (Pantoloc®).*

*Exemptions for **rheumatologists** include methotrexate injections, meloxicam, chlorambucil (Leukeran®), chloroquine, piroxicam suppositories and tenoxicam.*

The quickest way to check for a prescriber exemption is to enter the claim on PharmaNet. If the claim is not covered, you can reverse the claim and advise the patient they need Special Authority approval.

You can also check the PharmaCare website. The Special Authority criteria page for each drug indicates whether there are prescriber exemptions. Visit www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/sa/saindex.html.

You can also call the PharmaNet HelpDesk for information on possible prescriber exemptions.

INTERESTED IN PHARMACARE DRUG COVERAGE DECISIONS?

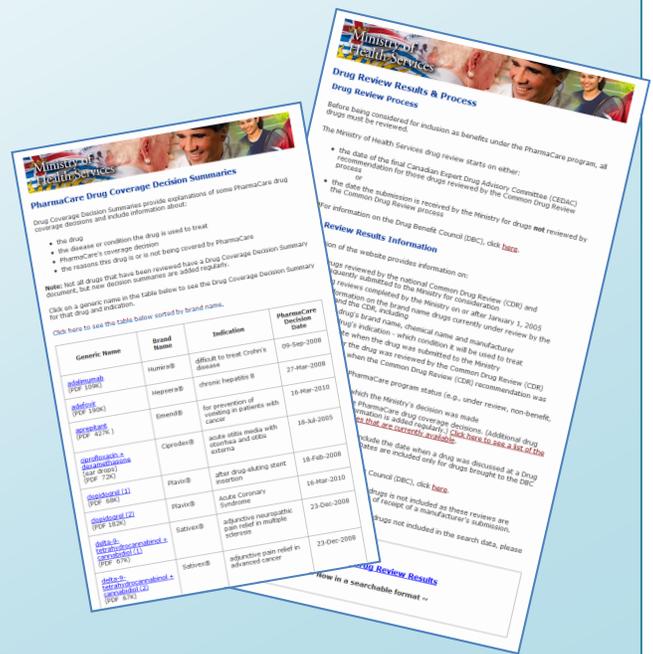
PharmaCare’s website offers information on the **results of drug reviews** completed on or after January 1, 2005.

You can search our database of drug review results at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/formulary.

Our website also offers easy-to-understand explanations of some drug coverage decisions in the form of **Drug Decision Summaries** which include information about the:

- drug
- disease or condition the drug is used to treat
- PharmaCare coverage decision
- reasons this drug is or is not covered by PharmaCare.

Not all drugs reviewed have a Drug Decision Summary document, but new decision summaries are added regularly. See the list of Drug Decision Summaries currently available at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/formulary/dds.html.



SPECIAL SERVICES FEES

The number of Special Services fees that PharmaCare paid each month over the past year:

Apr 20102,108	Dec 2009.....3,103	Aug 2009 ... 2,212
Mar 20102,109	Nov 20092,584	Jul 2009..... 2,619
Feb 20101,832	Oct 20092,758	Jun 2009.... 2,554
Jan 2010.....1,731	Sep 2009.....2,643	May 2009 .. 2,357

LOW COST ALTERNATIVE (LCA) / REFERENCE DRUG PROGRAM (RDP) BOOKLET—CHANGES

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP

The following newly-approved benefits have been added to existing LCA/RDP categories as eligible benefits for Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C, F, and, if applicable, Plan G. (For the Plan G formulary, please visit the [Special Authority Information](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/) page on the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/.)

DIN	DRUG NAME	RDP	LCA STATUS	SPECIAL AUTHORITY ONLY
02332566	FOSINOPRIL TABLETS 10 mg tablet	Yes	P	
02332574	FOSINOPRIL TABLETS 20 mg tablet	Yes	P	
02304368	PMS-DESMOPRESSIN 0.1 mg tablet		p*	Yes
02304376	PMS-DESMOPRESSIN 0.2 mg tablet		p*	Yes
02295369	PMS-RAMIPRIL 1.25 mg capsule		P	
02247917	PMS-RAMIPRIL 2.5 mg capsule		P	
02247918	PMS-RAMIPRIL 5 mg capsule		P	
02247919	PMS-RAMIPRIL 10 mg capsule		P	

P – Partially covered P* – Drug is a partial benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.

The following products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Plan P. This product is also eligible under the Limited Coverage Program—by Special Authority only—for Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C and F.

DIN	DRUG NAME	LCA STATUS
02345579	APO-RABEPRAZOLE EC 10 mg tablet	P
02345587	APO-RABEPRAZOLE EC 20 mg tablet	P

P – Partially covered

New LCA Categories

The following drugs (including both existing and new PharmaCare benefits) will be included as new LCA Categories on PharmaNet, effective **July 21, 2010**.

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
OLANZAPINE 20 mg tablet	02325713	CO OLANZAPINE	F*	
	02238851	ZYPREXA®	p*	7.7039

F* – Drug is a full benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.

p* – Drug is a partial benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.

Changes to Existing LCA Categories

CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
NARATRIPTAN 1 mg tablet	02237820	AMERGE®	P	8.0671
	02314290	NOVO-NARATRIPTAN	F	
NARATRIPTAN 2.5 mg tablet	02237821	AMERGE	P	8.5238
	02314304	NOVO-NARATRIPTAN	F	
SALBUTAMOL AER INH 100MCG	02232570	AIROMIR®	F	
	02245669	APO-SALVENT CHC FREE	P	0.0311
	02244914	RATIO-SALBUTAMOL HFA	P	0.0311
	02241497	VENTOLIN HFA®	P	0.0311

F – Fully covered

P – Partially covered

MULTIPLE-SOURCE GENERICS PRICING POLICY

Finasteride

The following generic **finasteride** products are:

- subject to the [Multiple-Source Generics Pricing Policy](#) as of **May 7, 2010**, and
- included as new LCA Categories on PharmaNet, effective **July 21, 2010**.



NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	DRUG NAME	LCA STATUS	LCA PRICE	RDP	COST REDUCTION FACTOR
FINASTERIDE 5 mg tablet	02348500	NOVO-FINASTERIDE	F*		No	0.00%
	02310112	PMS-FINASTERIDE	F*		No	0.00%
	02010909	PROSCAR®	P*	0.9615	No	N/A
	02306905	RATIO-FINASTERIDE	F*		No	0.00%
	02322579	SANDOZ FINASTERIDE	F*		No	0.00%

F* – Drug is a full benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.

P* – Drug is a partial benefit if Special Authority is in place when the prescription is filled.

NEW BENEFITS

The following new products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C, F, and, if indicated below, Plan G and/or Plan P.

DIN	DRUG NAME	PLAN G	PLAN P
02335700	TOLOXIN® (DIGOXIN) 0.0625 mg tablet	No	Yes
02335719	TOLOXIN® (DIGOXIN) 0.125 mg tablet	No	Yes
02335727	TOLOXIN® (DIGOXIN) 0.25 mg tablet	No	Yes

The following products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Plan P. This product is also eligible under the Limited Coverage Program—by Special Authority only—for Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C and F.

DIN	DRUG NAME
02323192	OXYCONTIN® (OXYCODONE) 15 mg capsule
02323206	OXYCONTIN® (OXYCODONE) 30 mg capsule
02323214	OXYCONTIN® (OXYCODONE) 60 mg capsule

NON-BENEFITS

The following products have been reviewed and will not be added as benefits under PharmaCare.

DIN	DRUG NAME
02305062	APO-METFORMIN ER 500 mg tablet
02246180	CALCIUM with VITAMIN D3 500 mg tablet
02324067	CO MEMANTINE 10 mg tablet
02229250	ZYPREXA® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 2.5 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02229269	ZYPREXA® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 5 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02229277	ZYPREXA® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 7.5 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02229285	ZYPREXA® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 10 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02238850	ZYPREXA® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 15 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02238851	ZYPREXA® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 20 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02243086	ZYPREXA ZYDIS® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 5 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02243087	ZYPREXA ZYDIS® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 10 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02243088	ZYPREXA ZYDIS® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 15 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder
02243089	ZYPREXA ZYDIS® (OLANZAPINE) [†] 20 mg tablet for acute and maintenance treatment of bipolar disorder

[†] Please note that olanzapine remains a benefit under the Limited Drug Coverage Program for the treatment of schizophrenia or other psychosis as described on the Special Authority criteria page at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/sa/criteria/restricted/olanzapine.html.