



For British Columbia's PharmaNet Users

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**Holiday Hours for Help Desk**



The PharmaNet Help Desk will be closed from:

- 10:15 p.m. December 24 *until*
- 10:15 p.m. December 25

If you experience connection problems during this time, please call (250) 361-5790.

The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system will be available via the Help Desk phone numbers.

**Year-End Change Window**

To allow for annual routine maintenance activities:

- **Health Insurance BC (HIBC) representatives** will be unable to view or make changes to existing Fair PharmaCare records from 7:30 a.m. December 31 until 8 a.m. January 1.
- **HIBC representatives** will be able to register callers for Fair PharmaCare until noon December 31. Full phone registration services for Fair PharmaCare will resume no later than 8 a.m. on January 1.
- **Fair PharmaCare Registration website** will be unavailable starting at noon December 31. We anticipate service will resume before 8 a.m. on January 1.

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.

## Improving PharmaNet Processing Times

Recently, there have been occasional PharmaNet slowdowns and time-out issues when processing large numbers of claims from pharmacies during peak days and times. We apologize for the impact on BC pharmacies.

The Ministry of Health is looking at options to eliminate or reduce the causes of these incidents, including better management of the high volume of transactions seen during this time of year.

The Ministry has already made changes to accommodate higher claims volumes. Additionally, as you may be aware, the PharmaNet infrastructure will be replaced in 2013 to further improve patient safety and reduce administrative time for pharmacists and physicians.

### What you can do in the meantime...

When a large number of pharmacies submit claims in batches, it can slow down the system for everyone. To keep processing times within manageable levels, we are asking pharmacies not to submit batched claims during peak volume times. **The times to avoid are from 8 to 10 AM and from 2 to 4 PM each day.**

As well, please be aware that we anticipate heavy volumes of traffic on December 24.

Thank you for your cooperation.

## Proper Use of the PharmaNet Network

A network monitoring company contracted by a multinational corporation recently identified certain IP addresses that had illegally downloaded movies. These IP addresses were traced to the SPAN BC Network and later identified as pharmacy computers using SPAN/BC.

The network monitoring company asked the Government of B.C. to take action on these illegal downloads. Appropriate steps are being taken to deal with the incidents.

To prevent further incidents, we ask all pharmacy owners to advise their staff to use PharmaNet and the Ministry-provided network connections only for business-related purposes (e.g., processing prescription transactions or researching pharmacy-related topics such as reports on drug side-effects).

We will advise you if there are further incidents.

## Uploading Adverse Drug Reaction Information to PharmaNet

Whenever you are made aware that a patient has had an adverse drug reaction (including allergies to prescription drugs, non-prescription medications, and/or natural health products), you must update their medication profile on both your local system **and** PharmaNet.

**Your pharmacy software may not automatically update a patient's profile on PharmaNet. Check with your vendor to see if you will have to manually trigger the upload of the information to PharmaNet.**

### Entering information on adverse drug reactions

To enter an adverse drug reaction, use the **Patient Profile Information Update – TPI** function. Enter the required information in the “add adverse drug reaction” screen.

**Note:** Some software will ask you to select the drug from a list and will complete the DIN and drug name fields based on your choice.

Your software’s “add adverse drug reaction” screen should display the following fields (see table on next page).

Field Name	Mandatory?	Information details
<b>DIN</b>	Yes	Drug DIN, PIN, or NPN (Natural Health Product Number). See <i>Entering drug identifiers</i> below.
<b>Drug name</b>	Maybe	Drug’s generic name. Some software requires you to enter the drug’s generic name, while other software auto-completes the drug name when you enter the DIN.
<b>Reported by</b>	Yes	Person who reported the reaction to you: patient (or a family member); pharmacist; physician; Drug and Poison Information Centre (DPIC)
<b>Date reported</b>	Yes	Date on which the adverse reaction was reported to you
<b>Comments</b>	No	Details about the adverse reaction or allergy. ( <b>Note:</b> maximum number of characters that can be uploaded to PharmaNet is 80 characters)
<b>Practitioner ID reference code</b>	Yes, if comments are included	Your information as the health care provider entering the information
<b>Practitioner ID</b>	Yes, if comments are included	Your information as the health care provider entering the information
<b>Date entered</b>	Yes, if comments are included	Date on which the adverse reaction was entered into PharmaNet. Your software may not display this field if it automatically fills in the date.

### Entering product identifiers

Certain non-prescription and natural health products do not have a DIN; instead they may have a PharmaCare PIN.

To decide which drug identifier to use:

- If a DIN exists for a product, enter it.
- If there is no DIN, enter the product’s unique PIN.
- If there is no unique PIN for a product, enter the appropriate Miscellaneous PIN from the list available at [www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/pins/mpins.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/pins/mpins.html) and provide product details in the **Comments** field.

### Entering adverse reaction information for compounded products

When a patient has an adverse reaction to a product compounded with ingredients that have DINs, create an adverse reaction record for each DIN in the product, unless the patient knows which particular ingredient they are allergic to; in that case, create a record only for the specific ingredient.

### Entering adverse reaction information for non-drug products

When someone reports a non-drug allergy, enter the information into PharmaNet by using the “clinical conditions” screen of the Patient Profile Information Update – TPI function. Include the product’s name and details about the adverse reaction (e.g., St. John’s Wort: hives).

### Uploading adverse drug reaction information to PharmaNet

After recording the reaction in your local system, follow your software’s procedures for uploading the entry to PharmaNet.

## Potential for Misreading Drug Strength

On occasion, the last letter of a drug manufacturer name may appear to be part of the drug strength.

PharmaNet displays only the first 15 characters of a manufacturer name; longer names are cut short.

Depending on how a software display is set up, the manufacturer name may appear right against the drug strength.

If the shortened manufacturer name ends in a stand-alone upper-case “I” (e.g., MERCK CANADA I or ACCEL PHARMA I), the “I” could be misread as part of the drug strength (see example below where the stand-alone “I” suggests a drug strength of 120 mg rather than the correct strength of 20 mg).

		Manufacturer name	Dosage Strength
3 N 28/02/2011 FILLED SMITH			
112.0 2241094 TEMOROLOMIDE		MERCK CANADA I	20 MG CAPSULE
TAKE FOUR CAPSULES DAILY			

### Action to take

When reviewing the medications in a patient’s profile, pay particular attention to the drug strength when the manufacturer is one of the following:

ACCEL PHARMA I	AMGEN CANADA I	JONES PHARMA I	MAYNE PHARMA I
MERCK CANADA I	OPI PRODUCTS I	RAINING ROSE I	SANIS HEALTH I

Confirm that any leading “1” in the strength is a number and not a letter; most fonts display the number 1 with a serif. If you are unsure of the correct strength, consult the original prescription or the prescriber.

## Special Character Entry and PharmaNet

Although PharmaNet accepts apostrophes and hyphens, it cannot accept special characters such as letters that include accents or other special marks. PharmaNet replaces special characters with a randomly chosen letter.

**Example:** PharmaNet could convert the prescriber name Dräziç to Drxzib or Drizin. When PharmaNet runs the prescriber name check, the entry would be rejected.

To ensure claims are not rejected, please do not enter the following characters in PharmaNet. Instead, replace the special character with its corresponding standard, non-accented character.

Prohibited special characters	Examples
accented letters, such as grave, acute and circumflex accents	à, á, â, Ć
letters with tildes	ã, ñ, Ñ
letters with umlauts	ä,
letters with rings, bars, and other superscripted marks	â, ā, ģ
fused letters ( <i>substitute “e”</i> )	æ, œ
letters with cedillas	ç

## Dispensing Prescriptions when PharmaNet is Unavailable

Pharmacies can continue to dispense prescriptions while PharmaNet is down by entering the prescription claim details into their system software in the usual fashion.

Once the PharmaNet connection is restored, the claims are batched together and sent to PharmaNet for adjudication. Depending on whether your pharmacy flagged the claim as “pay provider” or “pay cardholder,” PharmaCare will credit the pharmacy’s or the patient’s account.

For further information on dispensing when PharmaNet is unavailable, see Section 2.11 of the *PharmaCare/PharmaNet Policy and Procedures Manual* at [www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/generalinfo/policy/pharmacypractices.pdf](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/generalinfo/policy/pharmacypractices.pdf).

## 2012 Pharmacy Payment Schedule

Following is the payment schedule for 2012. Payment periods run Tuesday through Monday. The payment date may vary if a statutory holiday is included in the payment period.

### PharmaCare Pharmacy Remittance – Payment Periods 2012

START DATE (12 a.m. Tuesday)	END Date (Monday)	SCHEDULED PAYMENT DATE
20-Dec-11	26-Dec-11	3-Jan-12
27-Dec-11	2-Jan-12	9-Jan-12
3-Jan-12	9-Jan-12	16-Jan-12
10-Jan-12	16-Jan-12	23-Jan-12
17-Jan-12	23-Jan-12	30-Jan-12
24-Jan-12	30-Jan-12	6-Feb-12
31-Jan-12	6-Feb-12	13-Feb-12
7-Feb-12	13-Feb-12	20-Feb-12
14-Feb-12	20-Feb-12	27-Feb-12
21-Feb-12	27-Feb-12	5-Mar-12
28-Feb-12	5-Mar-12	12-Mar-12
6-Mar-12	12-Mar-12	19-Mar-12
13-Mar-12	19-Mar-12	26-Mar-12
20-Mar-12	26-Mar-12	2-Apr-12
27-Mar-12	2-Apr-12	11-Apr-12
3-Apr-12	9-Apr-12	16-Apr-12
10-Apr-12	16-Apr-12	23-Apr-12
17-Apr-12	23-Apr-12	30-Apr-12
24-Apr-12	30-Apr-12	7-May-12
1-May-12	7-May-12	14-May-12

START DATE (12 a.m. Tuesday)	END Date (Monday)	SCHEDULED PAYMENT DATE
8-May-12	14-May-12	22-May-12
15-May-12	21-May-12	28-May-12
22-May-12	28-May-12	4-Jun-12
29-May-12	4-Jun-12	11-Jun-12
5-Jun-12	11-Jun-12	18-Jun-12
12-Jun-12	18-Jun-12	25-Jun-12
19-Jun-12	25-Jun-12	3-Jul-12
26-Jun-12	2-Jul-12	09-Jul-12
3-Jul-12	9-Jul-12	16-Jul-12
10-Jul-12	16-Jul-12	23-Jul-12
17-Jul-12	23-Jul-12	30-Jul-12
24-Jul-12	30-Jul-12	7-Aug-12
31-Jul-12	6-Aug-12	13-Aug-12
7-Aug-12	13-Aug-12	20-Aug-12
14-Aug-12	20-Aug-12	27-Aug-12
21-Aug-12	27-Aug-12	4-Sep-12
28-Aug-12	3-Sep-12	10-Sep-12
4-Sep-12	10-Sep-12	17-Sep-12
11-Sep-12	17-Sep-12	24-Sep-12
18-Sep-12	24-Sep-12	1-Oct-12
25-Sep-12	1-Oct-12	9-Oct-12
2-Oct-12	8-Oct-12	15-Oct-12
9-Oct-12	15-Oct-12	22-Oct-12
16-Oct-12	22-Oct-12	29-Oct-12
23-Oct-12	29-Oct-12	5-Nov-12
30-Oct-12	5-Nov-12	13-Nov-12
6-Nov-12	12-Nov-12	19-Nov-12
13-Nov-12	19-Nov-12	26-Nov-12
20-Nov-12	26-Nov-12	3-Dec-12
27-Nov-12	3-Dec-12	10-Dec-12
4-Dec-12	10-Dec-12	17-Dec-12
11-Dec-12	17-Dec-12	24-Dec-12