

BC PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

Edition 24-008: August 2024

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Q: Why does a recent guideline recommend against the use of DPP4 inhibitors such as linagliptin (Trajenta®) in people with type 2 diabetes?

A: The answer is in the current edition of [PAD Refills](#). Make sure to subscribe so you don't miss out on news and updates!



The PharmaCare Newsletter team works from the territory of the Lekwungen People, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. Our gratitude extends to them, and all Indigenous Peoples on whose territories and lands we build relationships.

BC PharmaCare counts on pharmacies and device providers to practice cultural safety and humility. To learn more, read *Coming Together for Wellness*, a series of articles by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and PharmaCare, and consider taking the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety course.

The PharmaCare Newsletter is published by the Pharmaceutical, Laboratory & Blood Services Division to provide information to B.C.'s healthcare providers.

www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarepharmacists
www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacareprescribers
www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacaredeviceproviders

OAT clients must sign accountability log; COVID-19 vaccine fee for B.C. residents only

PharmaCare continues to review policy following Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry's declaration of the [end of the COVID-19 public health emergency](#) and rescinding of related orders.

People receiving OAT must once again sign the prescription and the [accountability log](#) as per subsections 13(2)(a)(vii) and (b)(v) of the [Provider Regulation](#). Ministerial Order M212, now rescinded, waived these requirements as a health precaution during the pandemic. Any claim for OAT where a client has not signed the prescription or log is subject to audit and recovery.

PharmaCare covers the [COVID-19 vaccine administration fee](#) for B.C. residents only. Pharmacists can support people from out-of-province by letting them know they can receive the COVID-19 vaccine at a [public health unit](#).

As noted in the [August 2024 PharmaCare Newsletter](#), PharmaCare no longer covers COVID-19 or flu vaccinations provided by pharmacy technicians, nursing students and retired nurses, since the order permitting these professionals to administer vaccines was rescinded.

PharmaCare will continue reviewing other policies affected by the Provincial Health Officer's declaration. Any updates will be provided here in the PharmaCare Newsletter. Be sure you are [subscribed](#), so that you never miss an edition.

[This article was added on August 23.]

Resources

- [Passing of the COVID-19 public health emergency and rescinding of Provincial Health Officer Orders – July 26, 2024](#)
- [ImmunizeBC – Find a public health unit or community health centre](#)
- [Pharmaceutical Services Act – Provider Regulation](#)

Updates to immunization services as COVID-19 health emergency ends

Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry has [declared the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency](#) and rescinded all related orders, including her authorization of pharmacy technicians, nursing students, retired nurses and other health professionals to provide flu and COVID-19 vaccinations to meet intensified demand.

"I am confident we can manage COVID-19 without the need for the public health emergency."

— Dr. Bonnie Henry, July 26, 2024

As pharmacy technicians, nursing students and retired nurses may no longer provide vaccinations, PharmaCare will no longer honour claims for vaccinations by these professionals.

Pharmacies **may** continue to claim flu and COVID-19 vaccinations provided by registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) that are full members of the BC College of Nurses and Midwives; pharmacy students, under the supervision of a full pharmacist certified to administer injections; and [medical students](#), under the supervision of a licensed practitioner (e.g., pharmacist); all of whom are authorized to provide vaccinations outside of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

PharmaCare is reviewing other PharmaCare policies affected by PHO orders during the COVID-19 health emergency. Any updates will be provided here in the PharmaCare Newsletter. Be sure you are [subscribed](#), so that you never miss an edition.

[This article was updated on August 12.]

Resources

- [Publicly funded vaccines](#)
- [Drug administration fee, Section 8.10, PharmaCare Policy Manual](#)
- [Passing of the COVID-19 public health emergency and rescinding of Provincial Health Officer Orders – July 26, 2024](#)

PharmaCare Trends 2022/23

The latest edition of [PharmaCare Trends 2022/23 \(PDF, 1MB\)](#) is now available online. The report highlights progress in delivering an effective, balanced and responsive PharmaCare program, with sections detailing expenditures by PharmaCare plan, the top ten drugs covered, formulary expansion, and more.

This document is published annually by the BC Ministry of Health. It provides information about the PharmaCare program for health researchers, government staff and the public.

Data in this publication is from the fiscal year 2022-2023 and pertains to claims for drugs and medical devices and supplies to which PharmaCare contributed at least a portion of the cost.

Read previous editions of PharmaCare Trends on the [PharmaCare publications](#) web page.



Resources

- [PharmaCare publications](#)
- [PharmaCare Trends 2022/23 \(PDF, 1MB\)](#)

2024 B.C. Prescription Drug Atlas



The 2024 edition of the [B.C. Prescription Drug Atlas \(PDF, 3.3MB\)](#) is now available online.

This document provides an overview of the prescribing patterns in B.C. for opioids and benzodiazepine receptor agonists (BZRAs; benzodiazepines and the z-drugs zopiclone, zolpidem, eszopiclone and zaleplon) during the period 2016-2023. It also includes sections focused on the regulatory colleges whose registrants have legal authority to prescribe opioids and/or BZRAs.

Read previous editions of the Prescription Drug Atlas on the [PharmaCare publications](#) web page.

Resources

- [PharmaCare publications](#)
- [2024 B.C. Prescription Drug Atlas \(PDF, 3.3MB\)](#)

New healthcare colleges

Effective June 28, 2024, several healthcare colleges in B.C were amalgamated into two new colleges. The following colleges were amalgamated into the [College of Health and Care Professionals of BC](#):

- College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC
- College of Dietitians of BC
- College of Occupational Therapists of BC
- College of Opticians of BC
- College of Optometrists of BC
- College of Physical Therapists of BC
- College of Psychologists of BC

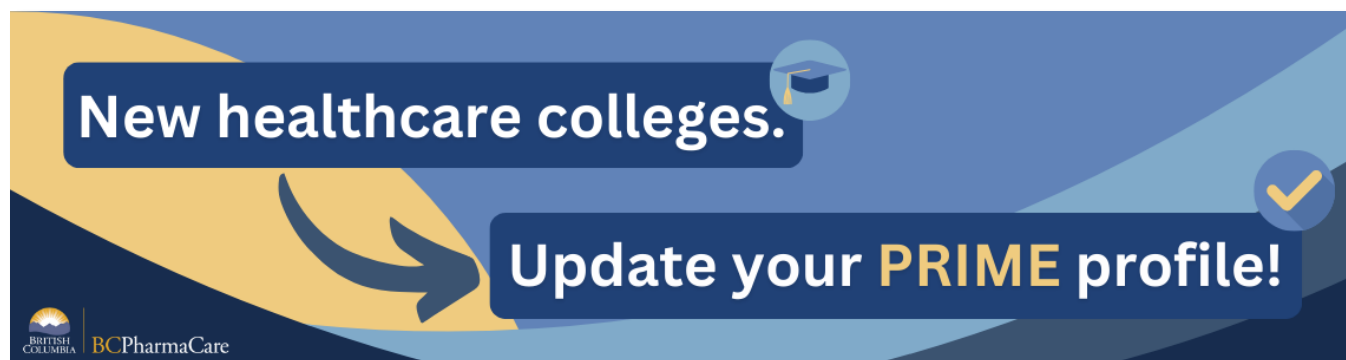
The following colleges were amalgamated into the [College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC](#):

- College of Chiropractors of BC
- College of Massage Therapists of BC
- College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC
- College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC

If you previously enrolled in [PRIME](#) using one of the discontinued colleges, next time you log in, you will be prompted to update your college information. The college amalgamation does not change your access to PharmaNet, but you should update your profile as soon as possible. Refer to [PRIME user guides](#) for instructions for updating your profile.

Resources

- [PRIME user guides](#)
- [College of Health and Care Professionals of BC](#)
- [College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC](#)



2024 One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship Conference

From October 3-4, 2024, the BC Centre for Disease Control will host the 2024 Western Canadian One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship Conference.

The conference aims to facilitate information exchange on antimicrobial stewardship between human and animal health practitioners, researchers, agriculture and government partners, policy makers, and industry members.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with colleagues, and learn, share and contribute to efforts to slow the spread of antimicrobial resistance through the effective stewardship of antimicrobials use in human, animal and environmental health settings. Visit [2024 Western Canada One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship Conference](#) for details and to register online

Event details

- Dates: Thursday, October 3 to Friday, October 4, 2024
- Location: Pinnacle Hotel Harbourfront, Vancouver – 1133 W Hastings Street

Resources

- [2024 Western Canadian One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship Conference](#)

Survey seeks pharmacist input on contraception prescribing

How do pharmacists feel about prescribing for contraception?

Researchers from UBC's Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Contraception and Abortion Research Team (CART) are conducting a study to understand pharmacist perspectives and experiences of prescribing for contraception, and the factors that facilitate and limit their providing the service.

Visit [ACT-Pharm III survey](#) to learn more and to participate in a survey.

The survey will be available until August 30, 2024, at 11:59 pm. Participation is voluntary. Participants receive a \$20 e-transfer as a token of appreciation.

The study's principal investigator is Dr. Laura Schummers, an assistant professor of health outcomes in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. If you have any questions or encounter issues with the survey, please contact pharmcontraception.survey@ubc.ca.

Resources

- [ACT-Pharm III survey](#)

Paxlovid™ coverage, supply and correct quantities for claims

As of May 28, 2024, Paxlovid™ is covered under Plan Z at no cost for B.C. residents with active MSP coverage. Refer to listing details in the [June 2024 PharmaCare Newsletter](#).

Pharmacies are encouraged to stock Paxlovid to support patient access across B.C. within 5 days of symptom onset. Supply is available to order through your regular wholesaler.

In PharmaNet, enter:

- Quantity: 1 package (quantities of 20 or 30 tablets will not process correctly)
- Drug cost: cost per package
- Dispensing fee: \$10 maximum

Learn more about Paxlovid, including prescribing guidance, dispensing information and resources at [Paxlovid - information for health professionals](#).

Resources

- [Paxlovid - information for health professionals](#)
- Plan Z Paxlovid listing - [PharmaCare Newsletter June 2024 \(PDF, 546KB\)](#)

RAT kit payment update

Since the last newsletter, PharmaCare has paid pharmacies for COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kit distribution as follows:

Payment month	Payment date
May 2024	August 6, 2024

Pharmacies are paid \$75 for each case of RAT kits distributed, and pharmacists are reminded to enter the correct PIN for each case of RAT kits distributed.


- BTNX: 66128325
- Artron: 66128338


Resources

- [2024 PharmaCare Provider Payment Schedule \(PDF, 165KB\)](#)


Policy spotlight: MACS claims

Policy Spotlight: One-Year Refresher: MACS Claims






Days Supply
1




Quantity
1




Drug Cost
\$0

XXXXXXXX


DIN/PIN
8-digit PIN




Prescriber ID
College Registration ID (Reg ID) of pharmacist who gave MACS



Enter PS intervention code when dispensing Schedule 1 drugs as a related claim



SIG: 10-digit phone number (including area code) of pharmacy
This lets healthcare professionals contact the pharmacy for patient information.
If phone number is not in first 20 characters of SIG field, claim will not be reimbursed.



Formulary and listing updates

Limited Coverage benefits: eptinezumab (Vyepti®), glatiramer acetate injection (Mylan-Glatiramer)

PharmaCare has added the following Limited Coverage items to the PharmaCare drug list. Special Authority approval is required for coverage.

Drug name	eptinezumab (Vyepti®)		
Date	July 30, 2024		
Indication	For the prevention of migraine in adults who have at least 4 migraine days per month.		
DIN	02542269	Strength & form	300 mg/3 mL solution in a vial for intravenous infusion

Drug name	glatiramer acetate injection (Mylan-Glatiramer)		
Date	August 1, 2024		
Indication	For the treatment of relapsing, remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS).		
DIN	02541440	Strength & form	20 mg/mL, pre-filled syringe

Regular Coverage benefits: tiotropium (Spiriva Handihaler® and Lupin-tiotropium Lupinhaler®)

PharmaCare has modified the coverage of tiotropium dry powder for oral inhalation to regular benefit.

Drug name	tiotropium (Spiriva Handihaler® and Lupin-tiotropium Lupinhaler®)		
Date	August 5, 2024		
Indication	For long-term once-daily maintenance bronchodilator treatment of airflow obstruction in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).		
DIN	02246793 (Handihaler) 02537850 (Lupinhaler)	Strength & form	18 mcg capsule for oral inhalation

EDRD coverage: lumasiran (Oxlumo™)

Effective July 16, 2024, the Ministry of Health initiated funding of lumasiran (Oxlumo™) through PharmaCare's case-by-case [expensive drugs for rare diseases \(EDRD\)](#) process. Clinicians may apply for funding through this process for eligible patients with primary hyperoxaluria type 1.

Lumasiran is distributed through InnomarPharmacy™. Initial applications are approved for up to six months and subsequent applications for up to 12 months. The prescribing physician is responsible for requesting continued Ministry funding.

Drug name	lumasiran (Oxlumo™)		
Date	July 16, 2024		
Indication	For the treatment of primary hyperoxaluria type 1.		
DIN	02525755	Strength & form	94.5 mg/0.5 mL solution for subcutaneous injection

Delisting: Sodium phenylbutyrate/ursodoxicoltaurine (Albrioza™)

Effective July 19, 2024, Pharmacare has delisted Albrioza™. Patients currently treated with Albrioza should contact their specialist physician regarding alternative treatment options.

Drug name	Sodium phenylbutyrate and ursodoxicoltaurine (PB-TURSO) (Albrioza™)		
Date	July 19, 2024		
Indication	For the treatment of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).		
DIN	02527707	Strength & form	3 g/1 g powder for suspension

Discontinuation: teriflunomide (Aubagio®)

On October 31, 2024, teriflunomide (Aubagio®) 14 mg oral tablets for relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS), will be discontinued. The last lot will expire February 28, 2025. Generic options remain available and have the same special authority coverage criteria.

Please advise patients of this change so they may schedule an appointment with a neurologist.

Drug name	teriflunomide (Aubagio®)		
Effective date	October 31, 2024		
Indication	For the treatment of relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS).		
DIN	02416328	Strength & form	14 mg tablets

Non-benefit: deucravacitinib (Sotyktu™)

PharmaCare has decided not to cover the following drug for the noted indication.

Drug name	<u>deucravacitinib (Sotyktu™)</u>		
Date	July 25, 2024		
Indication	For the treatment of adult patients with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis.		
DIN	02533030	Strength & form	6 mg tablet

Price reductions: obeticholic acid (Ocaliva®)

Effective September 6, 2024, the prices for the following products will be reduced.

Prices include 5% mark-up.

Drug name	obeticholic acid (Ocaliva®)	Strength & form	Current price per tablet (\$)	Reduced price per tablet (\$)
Date effective	September 6, 2024			
DINs	02463121	5 mg tablet	109.6718	103.5615
	02463148	10 mg tablet	109.6718	103.5615

Your Voice: Input needed for drug decisions

The knowledge and experience of patients, caregivers and patient groups is integral to [B.C.'s drug review process](#). If you know someone who is taking one of the drugs below or who has a condition any of the drugs treat, please encourage them to visit www.gov.bc.ca/BCyourvoice.

Your Voice is now accepting input on the following drugs:

Drug	Indication	Input window
eplontersen (Wainua™)	For the treatment of polyneuropathy (PN) associated with hereditary transthyretin-mediated amyloidosis (hATTR) in adults	July 31 to August 27 at 11:59 pm
danicopan (voydeya™)	For the treatment of signs or symptoms of extravascular hemolysis (EVH) in adult patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH)	July 31 to August 27 at 11:59 pm
clindamycin plus benzoyl peroxide and adapalene (TBC)	For the treatment of acne vulgaris in patients 9 years of age and older	July 31 to August 27 at 11:59 pm
sotatercept (TBC)	For the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension (WHO group 1) in adults	July 31 to August 27 at 11:59 pm



Did you know?

PharmaCare had 794,501 beneficiaries between 2022 and 2023. Read [PharmaCare Trends 2022/2023 \(PDF, 1MB\)](#) for more details.