

# BC PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

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## PRIME launches for all new PharmaNet users

PRIME has launched for all new PharmaNet users in B.C.

As of December 1, 2020, any person needing access to PharmaNet to provide care to individuals, either for the first time or who had PharmaNet access in the past but not on November 30, 2020, needs to enrol in PRIME.

PRIME is an easy-to-use online application. In PRIME, healthcare practitioners request approval by the Ministry of Health to access PharmaNet.

The PharmaCare Newsletter is published by the Pharmaceutical, Laboratory & Blood Services Division to provide information to British Columbia's health care providers.

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.

[www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarepharmacists](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacarepharmacists) | [www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacareprescribers](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacareprescribers) | [www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacaredeviceproviders](http://www.gov.bc.ca/pharmacaredeviceproviders)



Read about PRIME in [PharmaCare Newsletter 20-019](#), and visit the [PRIME](#) web page, which links to details specific to individuals in health authority facilities, community pharmacies and private community health practices.

## ActionADE data coming to PharmaNet

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ActionADE data about adverse drug events (ADEs) from several acute care sites in Greater Vancouver and Squamish regions will soon be recorded in PharmaNet. ActionADE is a software application developed by B.C. researchers to document ADEs in a concise and standardized way, to facilitate sharing of ADE information between health systems and care providers.

It is important for clinical users of PharmaNet information to interpret these records as ADEs, not simply as adverse drug reactions. Usually PharmaNet only records ADRs and allergies, but the records will now be much broader.

ADEs are the harmful and unintended consequences of medication use. They include such things as drug interactions, dosing issues, allergies, and issues around non-adherence. Adverse drug reactions are a subset of ADEs. They are an unintended consequence of, or response to, medication as well, but when it is taken under appropriate use (i.e., at normal doses).

ADEs include unintended, harmful events resulting from any medication use. Annually in B.C., they result in approximately:

- 276,000 emergency department visits
- 102,000 admissions
- 4,500 deaths
- \$100 million a year in health costs

Nearly one third of ADEs are repeat events, of which 75% could be prevented with stronger collaboration across the healthcare sector. The inclusion of ADE records in PharmaNet will help pharmacists readily assess drug impacts, better evaluate prescriptions for patient safety, and become key players in averting hospitalizations and deaths due to ADEs.

Depending on your PharmaNet vendor, ADE records may be presented across different tabs of your software. They will be easily recognized with the unique identifier \*ADE. At this time, only the ActionADE team enters ADEs.

Some pharmacy system software will be deploying software updates over the coming months to improve the user experience of ADE information.

For more information about the ActionADE research project, including guides to interpreting ADE records in PharmaNet, please see the [Adverse Drug Events in PharmaNet](#) web page.

## Phenelzine sulfate shortage

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There continues to be an ongoing global shortage of phenelzine sulfate (Nardil®), a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) indicated for the treatment of certain types of depression. Health Canada, in collaboration with manufacturers, is working to minimize the impact of this shortage on Canadians.

All patients who are treated with phenelzine should consult their healthcare professionals as soon as possible in order to discuss alternative treatment options and how to safely discontinue phenelzine.

Health Canada has communicated important information on how to consider switching patients to alternative treatments at: <https://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2020/73411a-eng.php>

## Reference codes for podiatrists are reverting to 93

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Effective December 3, 2020, the practitioner ID reference code (pract. ID ref code) for podiatric surgeons changes back to **93**, and will be backdated to October 7, 2020.

The amalgamation between the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and the College of Podiatric Surgeons of BC (CPSBC)(as announced in [PharmaCare Newsletter 20-017](#)) resulted in podiatrists adopting the existing pract. ID ref code for physicians (91). In light of rising verification issues, PharmaCare has decided to revert the reference code to 93 to avoid further confusion. For claims already sent to PharmaNet under 91, there is no need to reverse them and resubmit—the pract. ID ref codes will automatically be updated to 93.

Pharmacists must submit prescription claims for podiatric surgeons with the:

- Practitioner ID reference code **93**, and
- Podiatrist's 5-digit CPSBC licence number (practitioner ID). If you do not have this, either use the Prescriber Identification Transaction (TIP) or call the PharmaNet Help Desk to obtain the practitioner ID.

## BC Smoking Cessation Program update

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Effective January 1, 2021, PharmaCare will no longer be covering Nicorette® inhalers. Nicotine inhalers were previously covered under the BC Smoking Cessation Program (PharmaCare Plan S) as one of the nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) product options.

The remaining NRT products that are currently covered under PharmaCare Plan S will continue to be covered, including Nicoderm® patches, Nicorette® gums and Nicorette® mini lozenges. For a list of available NRTs or prescription smoking cessation drugs covered by PharmaCare, see [Eligible Smoking Cessation Products](#).

## Special Authority Transformation project underway

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The Special Authority (SA) team would like to thank everyone who participated in the [survey](#) regarding the transition to a digital SA process. Your feedback is valued and will be considered in transforming SA. Work for this project is well underway. More updates, including the roll-out schedule, will be provided in the [PharmaCare Newsletter](#) in early 2021.

See [Special Authority Transformation Project](#) for more information.

## Year-end reminders

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### Help Desk holiday hours

The PharmaNet Help Desk will be closed from 10:15 pm on Thursday, December 24, 2020 until 10:15 pm on Friday, December 25, 2020.

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

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

### Year-end change window

To allow for annual routine maintenance activities:

- Fair PharmaCare registration online and by phone will be unavailable starting at 7:30 am on Thursday, December 31, 2020.
- Online registration will be available by 8 am on Friday, January 1, 2021.
- Phone registration will be available at 8 am on Saturday, January 2, 2021.

### Blood glucose test strips

On January 1, 2021, patients will be assigned their annual limit of blood glucose test strips (BGTS). Please ensure you use the correct "Within Annual Limit" PIN, as listed on the [Diabetes Product Identification Numbers webpage](#), for claims until patients exceed their annual limit.

The list of blood glucose test strips eligible for PharmaCare coverage changes on a regular basis. Please consult the [list of eligible test strips](#) on the PharmaCare website before submitting claims.

All strips purchased by a patient, regardless of the payer, count toward the patient's annual limit.

### BGTS information for patients

Information on the [PharmaCare Quantity Limits for Blood Glucose Test Strips](#) is available on our website in [multiple languages](#).

### Fair PharmaCare deductibles for 2021

On January 1, 2021, PharmaNet will be updated to reflect 2021 annual deductibles and family maximums. Deductible accumulations will be reset to zero.

Fair PharmaCare coverage levels for 2021 are based on family net income for 2019. Income from Registered Disability Savings Plans is not included when determining assistance levels.

### Deductible information for patients

Fair PharmaCare registrants can get information about their deductible and family maximum by:

- [Requesting a Confirmation of Fair PharmaCare](#) letter be mailed to them.

- Calling Health Insurance BC (Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 8 pm; Saturdays, 8 am to 4 pm)  
From the Lower Mainland at 604 683-7151  
From the rest of B.C., toll-free, at 1 800 663-7100

## Benefits

The following products are listed as Limited Coverage benefits under Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C, F and W:

<b>DRUG NAME</b>	tofacitinib (Xeljanz™)		
<b>COVERAGE EFFECTIVE</b>	November 17, 2020		
<b>INDICATION</b>	ulcerative colitis		
<b>DIN</b>	02423898	<b>STRENGTH AND FORM</b>	5 mg tablet
	02480786		10 mg tablet
<b>PLAN G BENEFIT</b>	No	<b>PLAN P BENEFIT</b>	No

<b>DRUG NAME</b>	tofacitinib (Xeljanz™)		
<b>COVERAGE EFFECTIVE</b>	November 17, 2020		
<b>INDICATION</b>	rheumatoid arthritis		
<b>DIN</b>	02470608	<b>STRENGTH AND FORM</b>	11 mg XR extended release tablet
<b>PLAN G BENEFIT</b>	No	<b>PLAN P BENEFIT</b>	No

## Non-benefits

The following product has been reviewed and will not be listed as a PharmaCare benefit under the DIN specified:

<b>PRODUCT</b>	<b>DIN</b>	<b>STRENGTH/FORM</b>
baricitinib (Olumiant™)	02480018	2 mg oral tablet

## Your Voice: Patient input needed for drug decisions

The knowledge and experience of patients, caregivers and patient groups are integral to [B.C.'s drug review process](#).

The Ministry depends on pharmacies and practitioners to help connect patients and their caregivers with opportunities to provide input. If you have a patient who is currently taking one of the drugs under review or who has the condition the new drug treats, please encourage them to visit <http://www.gov.bc.ca/BCyourvoice>.

Currently input is needed for the following:

<b>DRUG</b>	levetiracetam oral solution (pdp-levETIRAcetam)
<b>INDICATION</b>	epilepsy
<b>INPUT WINDOW</b>	November 13–December 11, 2020

<b>DRUG</b>	vedolizumab (Entyvio®)
<b>INDICATION</b>	Crohn's disease
<b>INPUT WINDOW</b>	November 13–December 11, 2020