

BC PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

Edition 25-001: January 2025

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



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Q: How does the weight loss effect of oral semaglutide (Rybelsus®) compare to subcutaneous semaglutide (Ozempic®, Wegovy®)?

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!

BC PharmaCare wishes you a Happy New Year



Start the year off right!

For your staff:

Display these PharmaCare information posters:

BC PharmaCare Essential Links for health professionals



Contacting the PharmaCare Help Desk



For your clients:

Print a stack of PharmaCare information sheets, available in 15 languages, for when clients have questions.

- Fair PharmaCare Plan
- Contraceptives
- Diabetes supplies
- Palliative care
- Pharmacy services
- Prosthetics & orthotics
- Smoking cessation
- Special Authority

Post the PharmaCare information sheet QR matrix so clients can view info sheets on their mobile phones.

Encourage Fair Pharmacare registration for everyone. Share HIBC's PharmaCare brochure with clients. Download the brochure online or request an order from HIBC by emailing HIBCFormRequests@hibc.gov.bc.ca



For clients concerned about paying their Fair PharmaCare deductible, let them know that they may be eligible for PharmaCare's [monthly deductible payment option program \(MDPO\)](#). The [Fair PharmaCare information sheet](#) and brochure have details about how to enrol in MDPO.

Display the [PharmaCare registration poster](#) in an area where the public will see it.



Temporary benefit status for Cyprus-labelled amoxicillin

PharmaCare is temporarily reinstating coverage for Cyprus-labelled 250 mg/5 mL amoxicillin oral suspension (PIN 09858237), until March 18, 2025, after learning that some B.C. pharmacies still have stock of the medication.

Cyprus-labelled 250mg/5mL amoxicillin oral suspension is a regular benefit from December 18, 2024, to March 18, 2025, under PharmaCare plans F, B, P, C, I and W.

Amoxicillin oral suspension was designated a Tier-3 shortage in late 2022, and PharmaCare began covering the Cyprus-labelled product imported by Juno Pharmaceuticals on January 17, 2023. Coverage of the foreign-labelled medication ended in September. As of December 18, 2024, PharmaCare is temporarily reinstating coverage to allow pharmacies to dispense their remaining stock to patients.

Resources

- [Drug shortages](#)

Doxepin 10 mg shortage

Doxepin 10 mg capsules, marketed in Canada by AA Pharma, are in shortage until late January or early February 2025 due to manufacturing disruptions. During this shortage, BC PharmaCare is covering doxepin (Silenor®) 3 mg tablets, marketed by Paladin Pharma Inc., as a regular benefit (Silenor 6 mg tablets remain a non-benefit).

Resources

- [Drug shortages](#)

Remittance payments by cheque

The Ministry is aware that a small number of pharmacies may be receiving payments by cheque instead of electronic file transfer (EFT), as requested. This may be a result of a recent HIBC software upgrade.

After December 9, if a pharmacy that previously requested payment by EFT receives a payment by cheque, they should contact HIBC to:

- Confirm (and, if needed, correct) their payment method, and
- Confirm that their EFT banking information is up to date

Pharmacies that wish to switch from cheque to EFT for future payments should contact HIBC to update the payment method.

Resources

- [PharmaCare Help Desk](#)

Update: Vaccination remittance payments

Some vaccination claims from the fall that were not processed because of a records transfer issue will be reimbursed by the end of February. You can read about the October and November claims in the [December 2024 PharmaCare Newsletter](#).

Thank you to pharmacists for their dedication to patient care.

Resources

- [December 2024 PharmaCare Newsletter](#)
- [Publicly funded vaccines](#) – this season's vaccines, PharmaNet entry instructions, and more

Prolastin-C transitional coverage ending

The six-month transitional coverage period for patients switching from alpha-1 proteinase inhibitor Prolastin-C to alpha-1 proteinase inhibitor Glassia is ending on January 14, 2025. As of January 15, 2025, Prolastin-C is no longer covered by PharmaCare for any B.C. patient.

Canadian Blood Services (CBS) added Glassia to their formulary in July 2024 and provides Glassia at no cost to patients.

Prescribers are encouraged to meet with their patients as soon as possible to help them transition from Prolastin-C to Glassia. The web page [Prolastin-C and Glassia](#) has details for prescribers.

Pharmacists can help identify patients who may be affected by the switch and let them know they need to meet with their prescriber to maintain coverage. PharmaCare appreciates pharmacists' support.

Resources

- [Prolastin-C and Glassia](#)
- [Prolastin-C Patient List Request form \(PDF, 140KB\)](#)

Brand and generic price changes

The December 31, 2024 submission deadline for annual price increase requests on brand and generic products has passed, and no price increase submissions will be accepted or implemented for the remainder of the 2025/26 financial year.

Approved price changes will come into effect on April 1, 2025. Manufacturers will be notified by email if their request is denied.

Resources

- [Submitting price changes](#)

PINs for discontinued insulin pump supplies, infusion kits, to be delisted

As of Friday February 7, 2025, PharmaCare PINs assigned to insulin pump supplies and infusion sets that have been discontinued by Animas Canada and Medtronic Canada will be delisted in PharmaNet. PINs for these items should not be used to submit claims.

For patients to receive the correct level of coverage, providers should ensure they use the correct PIN for each diabetes supply they dispense.

The following PINs will **no longer** adjudicate as PharmaCare benefits as of February 7, 2025:

PIN	Discontinued product description
47450004	ANIMAS 2 ml OR 3 ml insulin pump cartridge
46340007	ANIMAS COMFORT infusion set or combo
46340009	ANIMAS INSET II OR 30 infusion set
46340019	MEDTRONIC Quickset™ Luer Lock infusion set
46340020	MEDTRONIC Silhouette™ Luer Lock infusion set or combo
46340022	MEDTRONIC Silhouette™ Cannula Only infusion set
46340023	MEDTRONIC Paradigm® Mio™ infusion set

Continue to use these PINs for reservoirs/cartridges and infusion sets/kits for Medtronic Paradigm® (500 series) and MiniMed™ (600/700 series) insulin pumps:

PIN	Product description	Manufacturer model #
47450007	MEDTRONIC Paradigm®/MiniMed™ reservoir	MMT-332A MMT-326A
46340014	Paradigm®/MiniMed™ Quick-Set™ infusion set	MMT-386A600 MMT-387A600 MMT-394A600 MMT-396A600 MMT-397A600 MMT-398A600 MMT-399A600

PIN	Product description	Manufacturer model #
46340015	Paradigm®/MiniMed™ Silhouette™ infusion set	MMT-368A600 MMT-369600 MMT-377A600 MMT-378A600 MMT-381A600 MMT-382A600 MMT-383A600 MMT-384A600
46340017	Paradigm®/MiniMed™ Sure-T™ infusion set	MMT-862A MMT-864A MMT-866A MMT-874A
46340033	Paradigm®/MiniMed™ Mio™ 30 infusion set	MMT-905A600 MMT-906A600
46340039	MiniMed™ Mio™ Advance (90°) infusion set	MMT-386A600 MMT-387A600 MMT-394A600 MMT-396A600 MMT-397A600 MMT-398A600 MMT-399A600

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
October 2024	January 2, 2025

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 \(PDF, 165KB\)](#)
- [2025 PharmaCare Provider Payment Schedule \(PDF, 120KB\)](#)

Exchange rate update for prosthetic and orthotic components

As of December 17, 2024, PharmaCare's exchange rate has increased from \$1.3764 to \$1.4305. PharmaCare's price list for P&O components is adjusted periodically, based on changes to the U.S. exchange rate posted by the Bank of Canada. When the rate changes by at least 5 cents over at least 5 consecutive business days, PharmaCare's exchange rate is adjusted to reflect the new rate.

Resources

- [PharmaCare calculation of component pricing – Prosthetics & Orthotics Policy Manual, Section 5.2.10](#)

2025 New Year reminders

2025 provider payment schedule

The weekly and monthly [provider payment schedule for 2025](#) is available on our [information for pharmacies web page](#).

Blood glucose test strip annual quantity limits

As of January 1, 2025, patients were assigned their annual limit of blood glucose test strips (BGTS). Beginning January 1, please ensure you use [regular BGTS PINs](#) for claims until patients exceed their annual limit.

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

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

BGTS information for patients

Patient information is available online about [PharmaCare quantity limits for BGTS](#) and as a printable patient information sheet, [Blood glucose test strips – annual limits \(PDF, 167KB\)](#), available in 15 languages on our [patient pamphlets web page](#).

Fair PharmaCare annual deductibles reset in the new year

As of January 1, 2025, PharmaNet was updated with 2025 annual deductible and family maximum amounts. Family deductible accumulations were reset to zero.

Fair PharmaCare coverage levels for 2025 are based on a family's 2023 net income. Income from Universal Child Care Benefits, Registered Disability Savings Plans and some BC Housing subsidies is not included when determining coverage levels.

Deductible information for patients

This can be a stressful time for Fair PharmaCare beneficiaries as many are paying the full cost of their drugs. Please let them know that they may be eligible for PharmaCare's [monthly deductible payment option program \(MDPO\)](#). Once they register, PharmaCare immediately pays for 70% of their eligible drug costs. Fair PharmaCare registrants can get information about their deductible and family maximum by:

- Requesting a [confirmation of Fair PharmaCare coverage](#) letter or
- Calling us Monday to Friday, 8 am to 8 pm and Saturdays 8 am to 4 pm from the Lower Mainland at 604-683-7151 or from the rest of B.C., toll-free, at 1-800-663-7100

DEDUCTIBLE RESET



Remind your patients that they can pay their Fair PharmaCare deductible in monthly instalments!

PharmaCare pays 70% of eligible drug costs right away – as if they have already met their deductible. Patients can call 1-800-663-7100 to ask if they are eligible!

Formulary and listing updates

Non-benefits: roflumilast cream (Zoryve®), somapacitan (Sogroya®), tralokinumab (Adtralza®)

PharmaCare has decided not to cover the following drugs for the noted indications.

Drug name	roflumilast cream (Zoryve®)		
Date	December 12, 2024		
Indication	For the topical treatment of plaque psoriasis, including treatment of plaque psoriasis in the intertriginous areas, in patients aged 12 years and older.		
DIN	02537532	Strength & form	0.3% roflumilast topical cream

Drug name	somapacitan (Sogroya®)		
Date	December 17, 2024		
Indication	For the long-term treatment of pediatric patients who have growth failure due to an inadequate secretion of endogenous growth hormone, also known as Growth Hormone Deficiency (GHD).		
DIN	02539934 02539942 02539950	Strength & form	5 mg/1.5 mL (3.3 mg/mL) pre-filled pen 10 mg/1.5 mL (6.7 mg/mL) pre-filled pen 15 mg/1.5 mL (10 mg/mL) pre-filled pen

Drug name	tralokinumab (Adtralza®)		
Date	December 17, 2024		
Indication	For the treatment of moderate to severe atopic dermatitis in adult and adolescent patients 12 years and older whose disease is not adequately controlled with topical prescription therapies or when those therapies are not advisable.		
DIN	02521288	Strength & form	150 mg/mL pre-filled syringe

Regular benefit: drospirenone (Slynd®)

PharmaCare has added the following contraceptive as a regular coverage item under [Plan Z \(Assurance\)](#) and [Plan C \(Income Assistance\)](#). Slynd® is listed as a full benefit – PharmaCare will cover the full cost of Slynd under Plan Z and Plan C. For a full list of contraceptives covered by PharmaCare, visit [Contraceptives – information for health professionals](#).

Drug name	drospirenone (Slynd®)		
Date	December 10, 2024		
Indication	Conception control in adolescent and adult women.		
DIN	02522802	Strength & form	4 mg tablet

EDRD coverage: vutrisiran (Amvuttra®)

Expensive drugs for rare diseases (EDRDs) are drugs that treat uncommon diseases and have a very high per-patient cost.

EDRDs are PharmaCare non-benefits, but some drugs and patients may be eligible for coverage on a last-resort basis through the EDRD process. Visit [Exceptional funding for EDRDs](#) for more information.

Drug name	vutrisiran (Amvuttra®)		
Date	December 19, 2024		
Indication	Treatment of stage 1 or stage 2 polyneuropathy in adults with hereditary transthyretin amyloidosis (hATTR-PN)		
DIN	02542420	Strength & form	25 mg/0.5mL syringe for subcutaneous injection

Effective December 19, 2024, the Ministry of Health initiated funding of vutrisiran (Amvuttra®) through PharmaCare's EDRD process. Clinicians may apply for funding through this process for eligible patients with stage 1 or stage 2 hATTR-PN. Patients who have existing PharmaCare EDRD approval for patisiran (Onpattro®) are not required to re-apply to access coverage for vutrisiran. Vutrisiran will be distributed through Innomar pharmacies.

Initial and renewal applications will be approved for up to nine and six months respectively.

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
iptacopan (TBC)	Paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH) in adults	December 23 to February 5 at 11:59 pm
rozanolixizumab (TBC)	Generalized myasthenia gravis (gMG) in adults	December 23 to February 5 at 11:59 pm
donanemab (TBC)	Alzheimer's disease in patients with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia stage of disease	December 23 to February 5 at 11:59 pm

Your Voice has extended the input window for the following drugs:

Drug	Indication	Input window
faricimab (Vabysmo™)	Macular edema secondary to retinal vein occlusion (RVO)	November 30 to January 17 at 11:59 pm
pegcetacoplan (TBC)	Geographic atrophy (GA) secondary to age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in adults	November 30 to January 17 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.