the DBL report

UPDATE

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An Official Accompaniment to the Alberta Health and Wellness Drug Benefit List (AHWDBL)

The Expert Committee on Drug Evaluation and Therapeutics (ECDET)

produced by Alberta Blue Cross

ABC 81171 Update (R2002/10)

■ **FLOVENT HFA** (fluticasone propionate) 125 mcg/dose and 250 mcg/dose MDIs were added to the AHWDBL as unrestricted benefits effective October 1, 2002. As well, **FLOVENT HFA** 50 mcg/dose was also made available via special authorization with the following criteria for coverage: "For the prophylactic management of steroid-responsive bronchial asthma in patients who are unable to use the Turbuhaler® form of budesonide." The transition from **FLOVENT** (CFC) MDIs to **FLOVENT HFA** MDIs, is in keeping with the Environment Canada national transition strategy (as per the Montreal Protocol) to phase-out the use of ozone-depleting substances such as CFCs in MDIs.

In making their recommendation to add **FLOVENT HFA** MDI to the AHWDBL, the Expert Committee considered a number of comparability studies assessing safety and efficacy of **FLOVENT** (CFC) vs. **FLOVENT HFA** MDIs. It should be noted that **FLOVENT HFA** MDIs have not been designated as interchangeable with **FLOVENT** (CFC) MDIs and the committee expressed concern that there is the potential for patients to experience differences in asthma control following a switch in products.

As a result, the Committee feels it is important that asthma control and adverse reactions be re-assessed by the physician when switching from **FLOVENT** (CFC) to **FLOVENT HFA** MDIs and is encouraging health care professionals to be advised of potential differences between the **FLOVENT** (CFC) and **FLOVENT HFA** formulations (as per the 'Dear Healthcare Professional' letter sent out by GlaxoSmithKline Inc).