the DBL report

Issue #45, October 2007

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

In this issue:

Highlights of New Products Added

■ **DUOTRAV** (travoprost/timolol maleate) (ALC) **0.004%/0.5% ophthalmic solution** is a fixed dose combination of travoprost and timolol maleate, approved for the treatment of elevated intraocular pressure (IOP) in patients with open-angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension who are insufficiently responsive to beta-blockers, prostaglandins, or other IOP lowering agents and when the use of the fixed combination drug is considered appropriate. Following the Review of Benefit Status (ROBS) review of agents used in the treatment of glaucoma it was recommended that **DUOTRAV** be added to the *AHWDBL* with an unrestricted listing.

■ **NOVO-ATENOL** (atenolol) (NOP) **25 mg tablet** was reviewed as a line extension to the 50 mg & 100 mg strengths currently listed on the *AHWDBL*. The Committee reviewed the manufacturer's product submission and concluded that this product should be added in an interchangeable grouping with PMS-ATENOLOL (atenolol) (PMS) 25 mg tablet.

Highlights of Special Authorization Products Added

■ **XALACOM** (latanoprost/timolol maleate) (PFI) **0.005%/0.5% ophthalmic solution** is a combination product used in the treatment of open-angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension, where a combination product is appropriate. Following the ROBS review of agents used in the treatment of glaucoma, this product was recommended for listing via special authorization (SA). In addition, a number of other recommendations were made regarding the benefit status of products used in the treatment of glaucoma (see next page for on overview). A full listing of the SA criteria may be found in the current *AHWDBL*.

Highlights of Interchangeable Products Added

■ **NOVO-OLANZAPINE** (olanzapine) (NOP) **2.5 mg, 5 mg, 7.5 mg, 10 mg & 15 mg tablets** are first entry generic products that will be listed in interchangeable groupings with the currently listed ZYPREXA tablets. Priced at a 30% savings over ZYPREXA, these products will provide estimated savings of $5 million to all government-sponsored drug programs. **NOVO-OLANZAPINE tablets** were added to the *AHWDBL* **effective September 1, 2007**.

■ **APO-ENALAPRIL** (enalapril maleate) (APX) **2.5 mg, 5 mg, 10 mg & 20 mg tablets** will be listed as interchangeable with the innovator, VASOTEC tablets **effective October 17, 2007**. The addition of **APO-ENALAPRIL** to the *AHWDBL* will provide an estimated $2 million in savings to the Alberta Health and Wellness-sponsored drug programs.

■ **APO-LISINOPRIL** (lisinopril) (APX) **5 mg, 10 mg & 20 mg tablets** will also be added to the *AHWDBL* in an interchangeable grouping with an **effective date of October 17, 2007**.

Special Authorization Criteria Change: Aranesp and Eprex

The Expert Committee has initiated a review of the current special authorization (SA) criteria for **ARANESP** (darbepoetin) (AMG) and **EPREX** (epoetin alfa) (JOI). The use of these products in non-myeloid malignancies has been clarified to anemia induced by chemotherapy. A full listing of SA criteria, and applicable SA request forms are available in the current *AHWDBL*.

Changes in Benefit Status:

Glaucoma Treatments

As part of the Review of Benefit Status (ROBS) process, a comprehensive clinical review of glaucoma treatments currently listed on the *AHWDBL* was undertaken. The Expert Committee gave due consideration to the information available and recommended the following changes to the listing of specific products:

■ **COMBIGAN** (brimonidine tartrate/timolol maleate) (ALL) **0.2%/0.5% ophthalmic solution** will be moved from a listing via special authorization (SA) to an unrestricted listing.

■ **LUMIGAN** (bimatoprost) (ALL) **0.03%** and **XALATAN** (latanoprost) (PFI) **0.005% ophthalmic solutions** have been recommended to be moved from unrestricted listing to listing via SA. Please refer to the current *AHWDBL* for a full listing of SA criteria.

■ **PMS-DIPIVEFRIN** (dipivefrin hydrochloride) (PMS) **0.1% ophthalmic solution** has been recommended to be removed from the *AHWDBL* as it was found to no longer possess demonstrated therapeutic advantage compared to other presently accepted therapies or treatments. Following their recommendation, the Expert Committee was informed that this product is also being discontinued by the manufacturer.

■ **MIOSTAT** (carbachol) (ALC) **0.01% ophthalmic solution** has also been recommended to be removed from the *AHWDBL*, in order to enable broader coverage of higher priority products.

In addition to these recommended changes, **DUOTRAV** (travoprost/timolol maleate) (ALC) and **XALACOM** (latanoprost/timolol maleate) (PFI) **ophthalmic solutions** have been added to the *AHWDBL* (see previous page for details).

Antiviral Agents

A review of antiviral agents currently listed on the *AHWDBL* was also conducted via the ROBS process. Upon consideration of the information provided, the Expert Committee recommended the following products be removed from the *AHWDBL*:

■ **FAMVIR** (famciclovir) (NOV) **500 mg tablet**

■ **HERPLEX-D LIQUIFILM** (idoxuridine) (ALL) and **SANDOZ IDOXURIDINE** (idoxuridine) (SDZ) **0.1% topical solutions**

■ **ZOVIRAX** (acyclovir) (GSK) **5% topical**

These products were either found to no longer possess demonstrated therapeutic advantage or were no longer cost-effective compared to other presently accepted therapies or treatments. In light of the recommendation to remove **FAMVIR 500 mg tablets** from the list, the Committee also recommended that interchangeable products **APO-FAMCICLOVIR** (APX), **PMS-FAMCICLOVIR** (PMS) and **SANDOZ FAMCICLOVIR** (SDZ) **500 mg tablets** not be added to the *AHWDBL*.