the DBL report

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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

In this issue:

Highlights of:

ABC 81171 (7/2008)

Highlights of Products Not Added

■ **LIPIDIL EZ** (fenofibrate) (SLO) **48 mg and 145 mg tablets** were not recommended for addition to the *AHWDBL*. The Committee noted that no clinical information had been provided to justify the additional cost of **LIPIDIL EZ** as compared to other fibrate therapies. Further, **LIPIDIL EZ** is priced almost identically to the LCA for micronized fenofibrate but is more expensive than the Supra formulation. Hence, the Committee concluded that this product should not be added as it fails to offer a cost and/or therapeutic advantage.

■ **METROGEL** (metronidazole) (GAL) **1% topical gel** was considered for potential addition to the *AHWDBL*. The Committee noted that once daily use of **METROGEL 1%** may provide cost savings as compared to the twice-daily regimen of Metrogel 0.75% because they are priced identically on a cost per gram basis. However, the submission did not provide clinical evidence to support the efficacy of once daily dosing of **METROGEL 1%** vis-à-vis Metrogel 0.75% applied twice daily. The Committee concluded that this product should not be added as it failed to demonstrate a therapeutic advantage.

■ **MEZAVANT** (mesalamine) (SHB) **1.2 delayed and extended release tablet** was not recommended for addition to the *AHWDBL* as it failed to offer a cost and/or therapeutic advantage. The Committee indicated that the manufacturer had not provided evidence to support that the use of **MEZAVANT** resulted in improved patient compliance rates and that the improved compliance resulted in better clinical outcomes (i.e., such as decreases in disease recurrence).

Highlights of Interchangeable Products Added May 1, 2008

■ **GEN-CLARITHROMYCIN, pms-CLARITHROMYCIN and RATIO-CLARITHROMYCIN** (clarithromycin) **500 mg tablets** have been added to the *AHWDBL* as first-entry generic products interchangeable with the innovator product, Biaxin BID (ABB). Savings of over $250,000 may be provided to all government-sponsored drug programs in the first year of listing.

■ **RAN-PANTOPRAZOLE** (pantoprazole sodium sesquihydrate) (RAN) **40 mg enteric-coated tablets** have been added to the *AHWDBL* as first-entry generic products interchangeable with Pantoloc (NYC). Savings of over $7,500,000 to all government-sponsored drug programs may be provided in the first year of listing.

■ **NOVO-MORPHINE SR** (morphine sulfate) (NOV) **100 mg and 200 mg sustained release tablets** have been added to the *AHWDBL* as first-entry generic products interchangeable with the innovator product, MS Contin (PUR). Savings of almost $300,000 may be provided to all government-sponsored drug programs in the first year of listing.

Highlights of Changes to Benefit Status

■ The special authorization criteria for **ENBREL** (etanercept) (AMG) **25 mg vials and 50 mg pre-filled syringes for injection** have been revised to include its use in the reduction of the signs and symptoms of Plaque Psoriasis (PsO). After review of a product resubmission and consultation with Alberta Dermatologists, the Committee recommended listing via special authorization as Enbrel offers a therapeutic advantage in select patients with severe, debilitating PsO. Please refer to the current *AHWDBL* for a complete listing of the special authorization criteria.

■ **ENBREL** (etanercept) (AMG) **25 mg vials and 50 mg pre-filled syringes for injection** and **HUMIRA** (adalimumab) (ABB) **40 mg/0.8 mL pre-filled syringes** may be covered for select individuals with Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS). After consultation with Alberta Rheumatologists, the Expert Committee recommended coverage via special authorization for these products for the reduction of signs and symptoms of AS. Please refer to the current *AHWDBL* for a complete listing of the special authorization criteria.

Highlights of New Products Added

■ **EPREX** (epoetin alfa) (JOI) **30,000 IU/0.75 mL pre-filled syringes** are a line extension of the product line, Eprex. The Committee recommended that this formulation be added to the *AHWDBL* via special authorization for the treatment of chemotherapy induced anemias in patients with non-myeloid malignancies as its use may reduce wastage for those patients currently taking 40,000 IU weekly that require a 25% dose reduction due to increasing hemoglobin levels, minimize possibility of dosing errors and enhance patient compliance and convenience. Please refer to the *AHWDBL* for a complete listing of the special authorization criteria.

■ **RAPTIVA** (efalizumab) (SRO) **150 mg/vial injection** has been added to the *AHWDBL* as a special authorization benefit for the reduction of the signs and symptoms of Plaque Psoriasis (PsO). This product was originally reviewed via the Common Drug Review and given a positive listing recommendation. Prior to **RAPTIVA**'s listing on the *AHWDBL*, the Expert Committee consulted with Alberta Dermatologists to assist in the development of special authorization criteria for coverage for this indication. Please refer to the current *AHWDBL* for a complete listing of the coverage criteria.