



The Alberta Blue Cross Pharmaceutical Services Provider Agreement promotes sustainability of drug plans

The reduction in generic drug prices isn't the only positive pharmacy related news we have to share with you. The Government of Alberta has also announced a new pharmacy funding framework between the Alberta Pharmacists' Association and the Government of Alberta. This framework will reduce the rate of growth on pharmacy spending—in the shared interest of ensuring the continued sustainability and affordability of prescription drugs for Albertans. Alberta Blue Cross was part of these discussions as the funding framework impacts the Alberta Blue Cross Pharmaceutical Services Provider Agreement.

What is changing?

Alberta Blue Cross group plan sponsors continue to be guaranteed the best value by dealing with Alberta Blue Cross, as the Pharmacy Agreement each pharmacy signs with Alberta Blue Cross ensures our plan members receive the best price on their prescriptions.

The following table outlines changes that will be coming effective May 17, 2018.

Change	Effective May 17, 2018
The dispensing fee will be reduced.	From \$12.30 to \$12.15
Reimbursement for daily dispensing and other frequent dispensing will be limited.	Daily dispensing (Day supply=1): Three fees per day per patient Other frequent dispensing (2-27 day supplies): Two fees per drug grouping per 28 days per patient Opioid dependence treatments: Not impacted by this change

Upcharges are being held to the April 1, 2017 levels for the two years of this new agreement.

“Upcharges” refer to any additional amount a pharmacist may charge for a drug, above the original drug cost, sometimes also referred to as “mark-up”.

Part of the new agreement, which you might have heard about, also includes changes to pharmacy services. These services are funded by the government, not employer group plans, and will have no impact on your plan.

So what does this actually mean for my plan?

This is a good news story for our plans as it will help to keep costs from escalating and generate small savings—in terms of dispensing fees and for daily and other frequent dispensing situations. Though the impact of these changes will likely be quite small, overall, they will help promote plan sustainability and provide savings on the cost of claims.

What affect will this have on my plan members?

Depending on where a plan member has a prescription filled, they may pay a bit less. For members who require prescriptions more often or who fill them more frequently, the limit on the number of frequent dispensing fees will provide them with increased savings.