

# Patient information

## Important change to drug coverage

Effective November 12, 2019, Alberta government coverage for three categories of drugs will change. This change only applies to patients on Alberta government sponsored drug plans:

- Non-Group Coverage (Group 1)
- Coverage for Seniors (Group 66)
- Palliative Coverage (Group 20514, Please note: Client may have Group 1 or Group 66 coverage)
- Child and Family Services (Group 20403)
- Alberta Child Health Benefit (Group 20400)
- Children and Youth Services (Group 19824)
- Income Support (Group 19823)
- Learners Program (Group 22128)
- Alberta Human Services (AISH) (Group 19823)
- Alberta Adult Health Benefit (AAHB) (Group 23609)

### Drugs affected

The drugs affected include the following:

- Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACEI) inhibitors– which treat congestive heart failure and hypertension;
- Calcium channel blockers – which treat angina and hypertension; and
- Statins (also known as HMG CoA reductase inhibitors) – which treat cholesterol.

### How coverage is changing

Government will introduce a limit on how much it will pay for drugs in these categories. Government will only reimburse the designated lowest cost drug or drugs in each category, an approach called Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) pricing.

In some categories, more than one option will be reimbursed to ensure approved uses of these drugs remain accessible.

### Switching to another medication

Evidence shows that drugs within each category are similar in use, safety and effectiveness. Most patients can switch to another drug in the same category safely and without affecting their health.

If you switch to the lower cost drug, your co-payments may decrease.

A one-month transition period, ending December 11, 2019, will be provided. This transition period allows time to discuss the change with your health care provider and adjust to the lower cost drug, if you decide to switch.

### Using your current medication

If you decide to continue using your current medication and it costs more than the designated lowest cost drug, you will pay the cost difference.

### More information

Please speak with your health care provider if you have questions about this change.

You may also contact Alberta Blue Cross at 1-800-661-6995.