PHARMACY **BENEFACT**

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A BULLETIN FOR PHARMACY SERVICE PROVIDERS FROM ALBERTA BLUE CROSS®

The Government of the Northwest Territories announces Biosimilars Initiative

Effective December 21, 2021, the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) is launching a Biosimilars Initiative forSpecified Disease Conditions, Seniors and Métis Health Benefits Programs.

The Biosimilars Initiative is an evidence-informed strategy to optimize public resources to get the best value for treatments and improve access to medications for patients. Increasing the uptake of biosimilar medicines will contribute to thesustainability of the public drug plans.

Effective December 21, 2021, all new patients will be required to use a biosimilar version of the affected products. The GNWT will no longer provide coverage for the originator brand drugs listed in the second column of the table below for new patients.

Patients currently on an affected product must transition to its biosimilar version before June 21, 2022, to maintain coverage for the molecule through their GNWT-sponsored health benefit program. All special authorization approvals in place for the originator biologic drug will automatically be applied to its biosimilar versions.

During the transition period from December 21, 2021, to June 20, 2022, both the originator biologic drug and biosimilar versions of the affected drugs will be covered to allow prescribers and patients time to discuss treatment options and to develop a plan for switching.

AFFECTED PRODUCTS

Active ingredient	Originator biologic product	Biosimilar product
Adalimumab	Humira®	Amgevita® Hadlima® Hulio® Hyrimoz® Idacio®
Enoxaparin	Lovenox®	Inclunox® Noromby® Redesca®
Etanercept	Enbrel®	Brenzys® Erelzi®
Infliximab	Remicade®	Inflectra® Renflexis® Avsola®
Insulin glargine	Lantus®	Basaglar®
Insulin lispro	Humalog®	Admelog®

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Insulin aspart	NovoRapid®	Trurapi®
Filgrastim	Neupogen®	Grastofil® Nivestym®
Pegfilgrastim	Neulasta®	Lapelga® Fulphila® Nyvepria®
Rituximab	Rituxan®	Truxima® Riximyo® Ruxience® Riabni®[2]
Glatiramer [1]	Copaxone®	Glatect®

[1] - Non-biologic complex drug
[2] - To be Listed

Future off-patent biosimilar originators will be added to this policy following Health Canada approval of a biosimilar brand alternative and GNWTs review of manufacturers' submissions.

Exceptions

If there is a medical reason why a patient cannot switch to the biosimilar, the prescriber can submit a request for exceptional coverage to Alberta Blue Cross. In the request, the prescriber must clearly identify why the patient is unable to switch and evidence that all biosimilar drug products have been tried prior to the request being made. If a trial has been attempted and halted, the trial must be well documented and a rationale for halting use of the biosimilar therapy must be included in a request for exception. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area)
403-294-4041 (Calgary and area)
1-800-361-9632 (toll free)
FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area)
FAX 1-877-305-9911 (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefacts and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims.

Visit **ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php**

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