

Alberta Public Health Activities Program (APHAP) Influenza Immunization Program 2017/2018

This season's public Influenza Immunization Program begins **October 23, 2017**.

Pharmacist participation in the publicly-funded influenza immunization program is guided by the Alberta Government *Influenza Immunization Policy (IIP)*, the Alberta College of Pharmacists (ACP) *Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians*, the *Standards for the Operation of Licensed Pharmacies* and Ministerial Order 23/2014 (the Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services).

The Alberta Pharmacists' Association has updated the influenza immunization education program for 2017/2018 which supports pharmacists in understanding the IIP. The education program should be completed prior to administering influenza vaccine and can be found at www.rxa.ca/pharmacy-initiatives/influenza-immunization-program.aspx.

Updates to the Influenza Immunization Program for 2017/2018 include:

- The IIP has been updated and can be accessed at Alberta Influenza Immunization Policy at www.health.alberta.ca/professionals/immunization-policy.html.
- Only Fluzone® (predominantly as prefilled syringes but multi-dose vials may be available) will be available to pharmacies for the publicly-funded influenza program for clients nine (9) years of age and older.
- FluMist and Fluad will NOT be available as part of the 2017/2018 publicly-funded program. (Note that FLUAD may be used by Alberta Health Services as part of their Outreach Program.)
- The minimum/maximum order quantities for Fluzone, at a time, are: 1 unit - minimum; 20 units (200 doses) - maximum.
- Exemptions to the maximum ordering thresholds will be considered during an outbreak situation only, as determined by Alberta Health. Outbreak situations will be communicated to pharmacists via Alberta College of Pharmacists and Alberta Pharmacists' Association communiqués.
- Administration of public influenza vaccine to the general public should not take place prior to October 23, 2017. Pharmacists may administer privately-purchased influenza vaccine prior to the launch date at a cost to the client. Pharmacists must inform the client that publicly-funded vaccine is available to them at no cost as of October 23, 2017. Should a client wish to receive privately purchased vaccine, vaccine and associated administration costs would be the responsibility of the client. Such costs will not be reimbursed by Alberta Health (at any time).
- The goal for 2017/2018 is to immunize 35% of Albertans.
 - For the 2016-2017 season 27% of Albertans were immunized:
 - 62% of Seniors 65 years of age and older
 - 21% of 9-64 years of age
 - 89% of Long Term Care Residents

For Reason Code identification, the following PINs must be used for pharmacist-administered publicly funded influenza vaccines:

05666603 - Healthcare Worker

05666646 - Pregnant Woman

05666602 - Greater than or equal to 65 years of age

05666664 - Nine to 64 years of age

If a client falls under more than one PIN category, the number uppermost in the list must be used (e.g., if the client is a pregnant healthcare worker, use the 05666603 PIN).

Pharmacists are required to submit influenza immunization service claims via Alberta Blue Cross within three (3) business days of administering influenza vaccine. This allows Alberta Health to reconcile vaccine distributed with doses administered in a timely manner.

Pharmacies **must order vaccine judiciously**. A sufficient supply of vaccine is available for pharmacies. Destruction of unused vaccine is the pharmacy's responsibility.

Vaccine Storage and Handling:

- Pharmacies must meet the requirements outlined in the Alberta Vaccine Cold Chain (AVCC) Policy prior to receiving influenza vaccine and prior to immunization services being offered. The AVCC Policy can be accessed at www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AIP-Vaccine-Cold-Chain-Policy-2017.pdf.
- Cold chain breaks must be reported to Alberta Health at health.imm@gov.ab.ca as soon as possible and within one business day of the occurrence.
- For the 2016-2017 season, 48 cold chain breaks were reported to Alberta Health by pharmacists. \$12,000 worth of vaccine had to be discarded as stability was compromised.
- The main reason for cold chain breaks (57%) was vaccine being left on the counter or in a clinic room overnight. Please ensure vaccine bags have a temperature monitoring device that is routinely checked and that workflow processes include a check of the clinic room for vaccine prior to closing.

Claims processes

Pharmacies can begin submitting Influenza Immunization Program service claims for the general public as of October 23, 2017.

In accordance with the Influenza Immunization Policy, a pharmacist shall not bill Alberta Blue Cross for administering influenza vaccine to children less than nine years of age. **Immunizers** may be immunized as soon as vaccine is available. Claims for Alberta immunizers can be submitted as of October 20, 2017.

For immunization service claims, the individual's *personal health number (PHN)* will be used to confirm eligibility. Netcare should be accessed to validate PHNs. Incorrect submission of the client's eligibility will result in claim rejections with the response code **CB - No record of this beneficiary**.

All claims must be submitted electronically through the Alberta Blue Cross PRIDE RT claims adjudication system with the following data elements:

- Carrier Code 16 (as the third party plan)
- Group number for all transactions must be 23464, Section 000
- Pharmacy License number
- Pharmacist identification number
- Client number: client's personal health number (PHN) as the client number
- Client's full name: last and first name
- Client's date of birth
- Client's gender
- Relationship code: should your software require you to enter a relationship code, zero (0) must be used as the default
- Prescriber reference ID number (e.g., license number of pharmacist with ACP injection authorization)
- Service date
- PIN/Reason Code
- Quantity (for example, one)
- "86" should be used in the Prescriber Reference Code field.

Only immunization services provided by ACP injection-authorized pharmacists in approved locations and situations are eligible for Influenza Immunization Program compensation. Pharmacists may not delegate the administration of publicly funded influenza vaccines to other healthcare professionals (paid or volunteer).

Charges of up to \$20 per injectable influenza immunization service may be claimed as per the Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services.

Pharmacists are reminded that Influenza immunizations administered in a workplace setting for the purpose of immunizing employees is different than immunizing in a public off-site clinic. Provincially funded vaccine may be used at workplace settings; however, the assessment for administration of those doses is not provincially funded and cannot be billed to Alberta Blue Cross. Pharmacists may charge the employer for the service delivery.

Influenza Antiviral Drug Policy as Applied to Vulnerable Persons in Congregate Living Settings

Through the Alberta Public Health Activities Program (APHAP), Alberta Health continues to provide funding for the management of influenza outbreaks in congregate living settings (Facilities) as per the *Alberta Health Influenza Antiviral Drug Policy as Applied to Vulnerable Persons in Congregate living Settings (Policy)*.

As mentioned in Benefact 691 (June 2017), Nat-Oseltamivir 75 mg capsule was added to the Policy. The definitions of Facility and Eligible Person under the Policy were clarified—Facilities are supportive living accommodations to which the *Supportive living Accommodation licensing Act* applies (e.g., assisted-living facilities) and do not include sites covered under the *Nursing Homes Act* (e.g., long-term care centres) or under the *Hospitals Act* (e.g., auxiliary hospitals).

Eligible Persons include residents in the Facility (at high risk of influenza complications) and employees/volunteers who work in the Facility and are not effectively immunized against influenza. Staff of excluded facilities may have employer-sponsored drug plan coverage to which antiviral claims can be submitted and/or be able to submit the prescription receipt to their employer for reimbursement.

Antiviral prescriptions should be treated as a priority and dispensed in a manner that meets the needs of the client (e.g., compliance packaging). As per the Policy, there should be no charge to the Eligible Person for any antiviral prescription costs.

Claims processes

To receive compensation for eligible oseltamivir prescriptions, claims must include the following data elements:

- Carrier Code 16 (as the third party plan)
- Group number for all transactions must be 23464, Section 000
- Pharmacy License number
- Pharmacist identification number
- Client number: client's personal health number (PHN). In the case of Albertans with no PHN, such as those in homeless shelters, HL0000000 must be used.
- Client's full name: last and first name
- Client's date of birth
- Client's gender
- Relationship code: should your software require you to enter a relationship code, zero (0) must be used as the default
- Prescriber reference ID number
- Service date
- DIN (for the oseltamivir product)
- Quantity (of oseltamivir dispensed)
- Payment amount (medication cost, upcharges and dispensing fee)
- "86" should be used in the Prescriber Reference Code field
- EI number in the format YYYYXXX entered into the special authorization field, left justified with no hyphen. Claims without the EI number will be rejected with the response code CZ - **No record of authorization number**. (YYYY is the year when the outbreak was declared by the MOH and XXX is the number of the investigation as provided by Alberta Health Services.)

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The following oseltamivir products are eligible for coverage:

DIN	Description
00002381842	Tamiflu 6 mg/ml oral suspension
00002241472	Tamiflu 75 mg capsule
00002304848	Tamiflu 30 mg capsule
00002304856	Tamiflu 45 mg capsule
00002457989	Nat-Oseltamivir 75 mg capsules

It is of importance that Nat-Oseltamivir be used in accordance with the Health Canada-approved product monograph. In the rare instance where no commercial Tamiflu or Nat-Oseltamivir products are suitable or available, an oseltamivir compound may be claimed using the PIN 00999999 (and the appropriate oseltamivir products).

Claims for oseltamivir prescriptions billed to other Government of Alberta drug plans, such as Coverage for Seniors (Group 66), are not eligible for coverage.

When you have questions

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 Benefits and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims. **Visit** www.ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php



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