

Update on measures to prevent drug product shortages

On March 20, 2020 we communicated to you in **Benefact 847** temporary measures to protect the drug supply for Albertans. We thank you for your tireless work supporting your patients and communities through this pandemic.

With the drug supply chain stabilizing, effective Monday, June 15, 2020, the expectation is that you resume dispensing the usual larger quantities (up to a 100-day supply) of drugs as you were prior to March 20, 2020. The Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage plans will once again have a co-pay of 30 per cent to a maximum of \$25 per prescription unless the product is in a critical supply situation.

Products in a critical supply situation

At the direction of Alberta Health, Alberta Blue Cross will be maintaining a list of products where the expectation remains that quantities do not exceed a 30-day supply. The list consists of products identified by Health Canada as Tier 3 drug shortages and additional products verified by Alberta Blue Cross as drug shortages.

This list is available at <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-resources.php> and will be updated on an ongoing basis.

Claims will be adjudicated as follows:

- Under Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group Coverage, the co-pay will be limited to \$8 for drugs on the critical supply product list in order to offset incremental out-of-pocket costs for plan members.
- Alberta Blue Cross Group and Individual Product plans will reinstate the Maintenance Medication Management edits; however, products within this listing are not subject to the edit.

Pharmacists should continue to use professional judgment relative to availability of drugs in their pharmacy and dispense a 30-day supply when necessary to maintain the integrity of Alberta's supply chain. If a pharmacist uses their professional judgment to dispense a lower quantity of drug not on the critical supply list, they should document (electronic or written) that this product is in short supply to support the more frequent dispensing. As per the current process, you may contact the Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations call centre to have these products investigated.

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Quantity Authorizations

The approval process for any requests for Quantity Authorizations in excess of 100-days supply will remain suspended at this time. Non-essential travel continues to be strongly discouraged as per the Government of Canada and Government of Alberta.

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

