

Pharmacy compensation update

In 2020, Alberta's government and the Alberta Pharmacists' Association agreed to a budget expenditure threshold for pharmacy services compensation for each fiscal year.

This year's publicly funded pharmacy costs are forecast to exceed the mutually agreed upon budget expenditure threshold of \$670 million and are expected to continue to grow. As a result, the government will be amending the existing Compensation Plan for Pharmacy Services through a new Ministerial Order so expenditure controls can be introduced and cost overruns can be prevented.

The following changes will come into effect on **November 1, 2024** and will remain in effect and be included in the Minister Order:

- **Initial assessment for a comprehensive annual care plan**

The initial assessment fee for a comprehensive annual care plan will be reduced from \$100 to \$70.

- **Follow-up visits for comprehensive annual care plans and standard medication management assessments**

The maximum number of comprehensive annual care plan (CACP) and standard medication management assessment (SMMA) follow-up visits will be reduced from 12 visits per patient per 365-day period to four visits per patient per 365-day period from the last day of the previous CACP or SMMA. If a patient has received 4 or more CACP or SMMA follow-ups prior to November 1, 2024, they will not be eligible to receive additional follow-ups until their CACP or SMMA renewal date.

Data shows that most Albertans receive an average of five care plan follow-up visits per year. This change aligns the maximum number of follow-up visits with actual practice and with the number permitted by other jurisdictions.

- **Continued requirement to seek patient consent**

A reminder that patient consent is required for all initial assessments for comprehensive annual care plans and standard medication management assessments. Alberta Blue Cross will continue to conduct compliance verifications to ensure that consent has been received prior to the assessment. Consent must be documented.

Core pharmacy services, like dispensing, pharmacist prescribing and prescription renewals, are not affected.

These changes will ensure that Albertans have continued access to quality pharmacy services while maintaining pharmacy costs within the budget expenditure threshold.

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

