

Bulletin # 1

March 25, 2020

## NB Drug Plans Special Bulletin COVID-19

This update supplements the Policy Directive that was issued on March 20, 2020 (*“Policy to Eliminate the Collection of Excess Co-payments in Community Pharmacies under the New Brunswick Drug Plans”*).

In order to manage potential drug shortages due to stockpiling of medications by patients, pharmacies have been directed by the NB College of Pharmacists to limit days' supply to 30 days. Where pharmacists have to decrease the days' supply to 30 days due to this directive, the New Brunswick Drug Plans will **only charge a co-payment to members for their initial 30 day prescription fill or refill** to offset the cost to members.

The second and third fill on the same prescription may be waived for members who, based on their claim history, normally fill their prescriptions and refills in excess of 30 days. Co-payment amounts may therefore be waived to a maximum of 2 refills per 100 days.

### Applicable Plans

- Seniors (Plan A) *including the Medavie Blue Cross Seniors' Prescription Drug Program*
- New Brunswick Drug Plan (Plan D)
- Social Development Clients (Plan F)
- Adults in Licensed Residential Facilities (Special Care Homes) Plan E
- Growth Hormone Deficiency (Plan T)
- Cystic Fibrosis (Plan B)
- Organ Transplant Recipients (Plan R)
- Extra Mural Program (EMP) (Plan W)

\* *Multiple Sclerosis Plan (Plan H) members are excluded due to the standard 30 days' supply restriction already in place for this plan.*

### Exclusions

This process does not apply to drugs that are not typically dispensed in excess of 30 days and drugs that are unable to be dispensed in excess of 30 days (e.g. designated high cost drugs, narcotics, controlled and other targeted substances).

### **Claim submission**

Pharmacies will continue to be paid a dispensing fee for each prescription fill.

The Pharmaceutical Services Branch is currently working on pharmacy adjudication system enhancements to accommodate these changes. In the meantime, pharmacies are asked to not collect a co-payment from members on the second and third fill on the same prescription.

Pharmacies must track any claims that should have a waived co-payment and re-submit the claims for reimbursement once system enhancements are in place. All claims submitted to the Plans for reimbursement are subject to audit and recovery.

We will continue to actively monitor information regarding COVID-19 as it is received and will assess these changes on an ongoing basis.

For further assistance, or if you have any questions regarding this change, you may call our toll-free Inquiry Line at 1-855-540-7325 (Monday – Friday, 8 a.m to 5 p.m.).