



# PHARMACY

# UPDATE

Alberta edition

MARCH 2021

## YEAR-END 2020 PHARMACY QUALITY RATING NOW AVAILABLE

The Green Shield Canada (GSC) Value-based Pharmacy initiative was launched in 2017 with the goal of improving care for our plan members through collaboration with community pharmacies. In the October 2019 Pharmacy Update, we reviewed phases one and two, and we introduced phase three which includes the implementation of the new reimbursement framework starting in July 2021. Complete details about the Value-based Pharmacy initiative are posted on [providerConnect](https://providerconnect.ca) (providerconnect.ca > What you need > Pharmacy Provider).

Pharmacy performance was measured throughout 2020, and each pharmacy's 2020 Pharmacy Quality Rating is now available on providerConnect. This rating is updated each year by March. (See timeline below.)

### VALUE-BASED PHARMACY TIMELINE



### The Value-based Pharmacy adjustment

The Pharmacy Quality Rating determines the Value-based Pharmacy adjustment that will be applied to pharmacy payments from July 2021 to June 2022 (the 2020 Reimbursement Period). Lower-rated pharmacies will see a negative adjustment applied to each payment that falls during this period while higher-rated pharmacies will see a positive adjustment applied to their payments. For pharmacies experiencing a negative adjustment, a safeguard has been built into the system to protect their estimated drug acquisition cost and ensure the overall reimbursement per statement is never below that cost.

#### **providerConnect® is your online resource**

providerConnect is GSC's web portal for health service providers in Canada. It gives you convenient access to forms, pharmacy manuals and guides, health coaching program information, and many other tools and resources all in one place.

Not acquainted with providerConnect yet? Register today at [providerconnect.ca](https://providerconnect.ca).

Note that the new reimbursement framework will apply only to pharmacies that have earned a Pharmacy Quality Rating – about a quarter of all pharmacies in Canada – while pharmacies that don't qualify for an overall rating will not see any change in the calculation of their reimbursement.

During the 2020 Reimbursement period that kicks off on July 1, 2021 and goes through to June 30, 2022 pharmacies will have their payment adjusted based on their star rating as per the schedule below:

Star Rating	Adjustment
1.0	-3.50%
1.5	-3.00%
2.0	-1.50%
2.5	-0.75%
3.0	1.00%
3.5	3.00%
4.0	4.50%
4.5	5.75%
5.0	7.00%

As a reminder, the value-based reimbursement framework is not a cost containment measure but rather it is designed to minimize variation in pharmacy practice and improve the quality of care patients receive. The reimbursement schedule was developed with careful thought and consideration by the GSC team in conjunction with feedback from our key pharmacy stakeholders to ensure a balanced distribution between pharmacies that receive a positive adjustment and those that receive a negative adjustment.

To further incentivize pharmacies to provide the highest quality of care, GSC has put a greater emphasis on higher star ratings (and subsequently higher positive adjustments) than on lower star ratings. For example, a pharmacy with a five-star score would earn twice the reimbursement value (7 per cent) in comparison to a pharmacy with one-star score (-3.5 per cent).

GSC will continue to monitor the impact of this reimbursement framework on pharmacies to ensure it is meeting the desired goal of rewarding and incentivizing pharmacies to drive the delivery of high-quality patient care.

To read again how pharmacy stakeholder feedback was incorporated to inform the final program design and structure, refer to the Pharmacy Update issued in January 2021.

**Performance goals for 2021**

Performance goals and star thresholds have also been reviewed and updated for 2021 (see below). Goals and star thresholds are informed by last year's final performance data for Canadian pharmacies. Achieving the goal means that a three-star rating is achieved for that measure. Achieving higher scores will result in a higher star rating at the measure level. To find detailed pharmacy performance information at the measure level, sign in to the EQUIPP™ platform.

Measure name	One-star	Two-star	Three-star	Four-star	Five-star
RASA PDC	<71.4%	≥71.4% - ≤78.6%	>78.6% - ≤82.6%	>82.6% - ≤90.0%	> 90.0%
Cholesterol PDC	<67.9%	≥67.9% - ≤73.1%	>73.1% - ≤80.0%	>80.0% - ≤87.49%	> 87.49%

Diabetes PDC	<60.0%	≥60.0% - ≤70.0%	>70.0% - ≤78.6%	>78.6% - ≤85.7%	> 85.7%
Statin Use in Diabetes	<58.0%	≥58.0% - ≤63.5%	>63.5% - ≤70.7%	>70.7% - ≤80.0%	> 80.0%
Asthma – Suboptimal Control	>19.0%	≤19.0% - ≥14.0%	<14.0% - ≥6.0%	<6.0% - ≥4.0%	< 4.0%
Asthma – Absence of Controller Therapy	>35.0%	≤35.0% - ≥26.0%	<26.0% - ≥18.0%	<18.0% - ≥10.0%	< 10.0%
CV Health Coaching	<5.0%	≥5.0% - ≤9.9%	>9.9% - ≤19.9%	>19.9% - ≤30.0%	> 30.0%
High Risk Medications	>20.0%	≤20.0% - ≥15.0%	<15.0% - ≥10.0%	<10.0% - ≥7.0%	< 7.0%

The Performance Period for 2021 started in January and will determine pharmacy reimbursement starting in July 2022 and continue through the next 12-month reimbursement cycle to June 2023. This process will continue through each 12-month cycle thereafter. Overall Pharmacy Quality Ratings and Value-based Pharmacy adjustments for 2021 will be revised and published annually by March 2022.

Goals for 2021 are posted on the EQUIPP dashboard and will also be available on the providerConnect website under the [Value-based Pharmacy section](#).

## **REMINDER: GSC’S PHARMACOGENETIC TESTING AND COUNSELLING PROGRAM**

As described in the January 2021 Pharmacy Update, GSC’s Pharmacogenetic Testing and Counselling program launched on March 1. This program is offered in partnership with GenXys Health Care Systems and covers the TreatGx<sup>plus</sup> product which consists of a pharmacogenetic test, access to medication decision-support software, and a pharmacist-reimbursed counselling service. Coverage focuses on mental health, specifically depression and anxiety, and prior authorization will be required. The fee reimbursed to pharmacists for providing pharmacogenetic counselling is \$35.

Visit <https://www.greenshield.ca/en-ca/pharmacy-provider-pgx> for additional information about the program. To learn more about GenXys and pharmacogenetics testing, visit <https://www.genxys.com> or to create an account visit <https://cdn.genxys.com/treatgx/login>.