

# PHARMACY *update*

British Columbia Edition

JULY 2019

## UPDATE ON GSC'S VALUE-BASED PHARMACY INITIATIVE

In 2017 Green Shield Canada (GSC) launched the Value-based Pharmacy initiative with the goal of improving care for our plan members through collaboration with community pharmacies. Phases one and two of the initiative are now complete and live, and we're actively working on phase three.

To remind our readers, in phase one of the Value-based Pharmacy initiative, we started measuring pharmacy performance, assessing it against a set of validated metrics (created by pharmacists), and sharing that information with pharmacies. In phase two, we started calculating a star rating or overall score for each store, called the Pharmacy Quality Rating, which was made available to GSC plan members as an additional piece of information to consider when making a choice of pharmacy. Phase three will tie the Pharmacy Quality Rating to pharmacy reimbursement.

We continue to work with the pharmacy community – including the Canadian Pharmacists Association and the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada – to develop the reimbursement framework which will be implemented in July 2020. The working group has brought forward six recommendations of which four can be directly addressed, and we are currently working towards their implementation. The remaining two recommendations are still being investigated for implementation feasibility. In addition, individual pharmacies that have gained experience working directly with the EQuIPP platform have provided additional recommendations, some of which have already been implemented while others are actively under review.

There has been a fair amount of discussion in the pharmacy community about this next phase. We will reiterate that with the Value-based Pharmacy Initiative, GSC's goal is to minimize variation in pharmacy practice and improve quality of care across Canada; it's not designed as a cost containment initiative. It will be revenue neutral for the pharmacy industry and employers/plan sponsors. Through phase three's reimbursement framework, a pool will be created to redistribute reimbursement from lower-performing pharmacies to higher-performing ones; in this way, we will provide payment based on the level and quality of care provided. The new reimbursement structure will apply only to pharmacies that have earned a Pharmacy Quality Rating – about a third of all pharmacies in Canada – while pharmacies that don't qualify for an overall rating will not see any change in the structure of their reimbursement.

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## CHANGE TO GSC'S BIOSIMILAR TRANSITION PROGRAM IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

On May 27, 2019, the British Columbia government announced that BC PharmaCare is requiring that patients taking three biologic drugs – Enbrel®, Remicade®, and Lantus® – transition to biosimilars. This will take place through a two-phased transition.

**Phase one** will occur between May 27 and November 25. During this period:

- Rheumatology patients will transition from Enbrel to the biosimilar Brenzys® or Erelzi™
- Dermatology and rheumatology patients will transition from Remicade to the biosimilar Inflectra® or Renflexis®
- Endocrinology patients will transition from Lantus to the biosimilar Basaglar™

Patients using Enbrel for plaque psoriasis are not affected at this time.

**Phase two** transition dates will be announced in the coming months. During phase two, gastrointestinal patients will transition from Remicade to the biosimilar Inflectra or Renflexis.

### What does this mean for GSC plan members in British Columbia?

By November 25, 2019, all GSC plan members in British Columbia taking originator biologic drugs for the listed conditions will be transitioned to the corresponding biosimilar in accordance with GSC's provincial coordination policies. To ensure GSC is aligned with the provincial coverage, GSC is adapting our Biosimilar Transition Program for all plan members who are residents of British Columbia and are covered under the PharmaCare program.

This is what the Biosimilar Transition Program will look like in British Columbia:

	Biosimilar Transition Program – British Columbia
<b>Option to continue on originator biologic</b>	No – claim will be denied
<b>Rheumatology patients on Remicade and Enbrel:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rheumatoid arthritis</li> <li>• ankylosing spondylitis</li> <li>• psoriatic arthritis</li> </ul>	Yes – plan members will need to transition by November 25
<b>Dermatology patients on Remicade:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plaque psoriasis</li> </ul>	Yes – plan members will need to transition by November 25
<b>Gastrointestinal patients on Remicade:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crohn's disease</li> <li>• ulcerative colitis</li> </ul>	Yes – plan member will need to transition (implementation will follow B.C. timelines to be announced in the coming months)
<b>Diabetes patients on Lantus:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• type 1 diabetes</li> <li>• type 2 diabetes</li> </ul>	Yes – plan members will need to transition by November 25

GSC will be issuing letters to affected plan members in August advising them to discuss with their physicians a transition to the biosimilar before the November 25 deadline. If PharmaCare grants an exception to allow someone to remain on the originator, GSC will follow suit, and pay for the originator as well.