



National Edition

JANUARY 2021

### **GREEN SHIELD CANADA (GSC) TO LAUNCH NEW REIMBURSED PHARMACOGENETICS COUNSELLING SERVICE**

Effective **March 1, 2021**, GSC will offer plan members a pharmacogenetics benefit in partnership with our preferred provider, GenXys Health Care Systems. The product we will be covering consists of a pharmacogenetic test, access to medication decision-support software, and a pharmacist-reimbursed counselling service. To start, coverage will focus on mental health, specifically depression and anxiety. Prior authorization will be required to ensure that the benefit is reimbursed only when specific criteria are met. The fee reimbursed to pharmacists for providing pharmacogenetic counselling is \$35.

#### **What does this mean for pharmacists?**

Pharmacists will work with patients undergoing drug treatment for depression and/or anxiety and who are experiencing side-effects or a lack of response to determine whether they would benefit from pharmacogenetic testing to optimize their therapy. The pharmacist will be able to request authorization for coverage for their patients by completing the prior authorization form (available on providerConnect<sup>®</sup>) and submitting the request to GSC. If allowed by provincial regulations, the pharmacist will also be able to order the test by completing the lab requisition form. In provinces where pharmacists do not have lab ordering authority, a recommendation to the prescriber for pharmacogenetic testing is necessary, and the requisition form must be completed by the prescriber.

The pharmacist will be able to register with GenXys to create a health care provider account to access the patient's testing results and the medication decision-support software. This will allow the pharmacist to review the results with the patient and make recommendations to the prescriber to optimize the patient's drug therapy. Note that there is no cost to pharmacies to register for an account with GenXys or use the software.

#### **For more information...**

Visit <https://www.greenshield.ca/en-ca/pharmacy-provider-pgx> for additional details about the testing process, step-by-step instructions on ordering the test, requesting authorization for coverage and how you can receive reimbursement for providing pharmacogenetic counselling.

#### **providerConnect<sup>®</sup> 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://www.providerconnect.ca).

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>. Note that the option exists for creating individual health care provider or corporate accounts (for health care providers practising as a team and sharing care of patients – such as a pharmacy or clinic).

## VALUE-BASED PHARMACY – PHASE THREE UPDATES

As we outlined in the November Pharmacy Update, phase three of GSC's Value-based Pharmacy initiative was delayed due to COVID-19. Ultimately, this delay served as an opportunity to continue enhancing the program to meet both pharmacy and patient needs. Throughout the last year, we continued to seek feedback from our pharmacy stakeholders and make further changes to program design and structure.

Here are the changes made for phase three:

- **Equal penalty/bonus** – The reimbursement model has been adapted to make the program as balanced as possible with a more even distribution of penalties and rewards. Our goal is to ensure that an equal proportion of pharmacies are in both the penalty and bonus categories.
- **Pharmacy reimbursement** – Our system has been configured to recognize the fixed costs faced by pharmacies. This will protect pharmacies' actual drug acquisition cost and ensure that overall reimbursement is never less than that amount.
- **Regional differences** – We have created three regional pools (British Columbia, Alberta, and the rest of Canada) so that pharmacy ratings reflect scores provincially, and the pharmacies in each pool are compared to each other. This will account for differences in the scopes of practice between provinces and other system factors.
- **Patients receiving compliance packs through the Ontario Drug Benefit** – We recognize that GSC may not receive all claims paid through the Ontario Drug Benefit for patients on compliance packs. We can now confirm that the data represented in our system for these patients is consistent with actual dispensing.
- **Secondary claims** – To support our focus on assessing quality of care for patients with claims where GSC is usually the primary carrier, the frequency of claims for coordination of benefits is now factored into the measure calculations to determine when a patient is included in the program.
- **Outlier reporting** – PQS has enabled a mechanism in EQUIPP to report and remove false positive outliers from the measures with ability to provide supporting evidence.

### Phase three launches July 1, 2021

The July 1 launch date means that pharmacy performance for the Performance Period ending December 31, 2020, will determine reimbursement for the Reimbursement Period of July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. As a reminder, all the details about the Value-based Pharmacy reimbursement framework are available on [providerConnect.ca](http://providerConnect.ca).

## Reminder – be sure to subscribe to EQuIPP

Year-end scores for 2020 will be available at the end of March, so if you don't yet have an EQuIPP subscription, we strongly encourage you to sign up now.

## What's next?

Look for more information about reimbursement in a coming issue of Pharmacy Update.

## ELIMINATION OF FEES FOR PRINTING DRUG SPECIAL AUTHORIZATION FORMS

GSC has always considered pharmacists to be one of our most valued partners in providing health care services to our plan members. Recognizing that value, we were the first insurer in Canada to compensate pharmacists for their professional services, starting with our Smoking Cessation Program in 2008, the Cardiovascular Health Coaching Program in 2015, the Deprescribing Program in 2020, and now the Pharmacogenetic Counselling Program. While providing these opportunities for pharmacists to meaningfully impact the health of our plan members through direct delivery of pharmaceutical care, we have also reassessed the value of reimbursement for non-clinical, administrative activities such as printing Drug Special Authorization forms.

Effective **March 1, 2021**, we will **no longer** reimburse pharmacies for printing Drug Special Authorization forms. We're hoping this service will continue to be offered to plan members as a courtesy in lieu of reimbursement.

While we are discontinuing reimbursement of this administrative task for pharmacies, effective **March 1, 2021**, alongside our new pharmacogenetic benefit, we will begin reimbursing pharmacies for each eligible plan member they help to optimize treatment.

This change supports our position on providing valuable services which lead to better health outcomes for our plan members and continues to support pharmacies by reimbursing and valuing the delivery of professional services.

## UPDATED GSC PHARMACY MANUAL NOW AVAILABLE

GSC's Pharmacy Claims Manual has recently been updated and is effective January 2021. Please take a moment to read through it as changes have been made since the last version. You can access the manual through the providerConnect portal at [providerconnect.ca](https://providerconnect.ca). Select **What You Need**, then click on **Pharmacy Provider** from the drop-down menu. A link for the Pharmacy Claims Manual can be found near the bottom of the page.