

PRESCRIPTION QUANTITY RESTRICTIONS Frequently Asked Questions

To ensure the continued supply of prescription medications during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry requires that Saskatchewan pharmacists limit the quantity and frequency of prescription drugs dispensed. Pharmacists have an important role in preventing the stockpiling of prescription medication. Refer to **Bulletin #722 Prescription Quantity Restrictions, March 18, 2020**, on the *What's New* tab on the on-line Formulary at <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/SearchFormulary>, regarding the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch (DPEBB) claims system changes.

Will prescriptions adjudicate if the claim being submitted is dated prior to March 18, 2020?

No. Effective March 18, 2020, only one prescription claim will adjudicate in a 28 day period. A prescription claim is a one-month supply to a maximum of a 35-day supply. Pharmacies will receive an HC/HD error code for claims that exceed one in 28 days.

The prescriber increased the dose of a medication two weeks after the first prescription claim was adjudicated. Will the new prescription adjudicate?

- **An HC/HD error code** occurs if the second prescription is the same generic and the same strength as the first prescription. For example, claim #1 is for metoprolol 12.5mg (dispensed as half of a 25mg tablet) BID and claim #2 is metoprolol 25mg BID. An HC/HD error will occur when claim #2 is adjudicated. For a dose change, you may contact the DPEBB to request a one-time Quantity Days Supply Exception (QDSE). Alternatively, you may submit a paper claim for claim #2, and indicate the dose increase details in the comments. The paper claim can be faxed to **306-787-8679**.
- **No HC/HD error code** occurs if the second prescription is not the same generic and same strength as the first prescription. For example, claim #1 is metoprolol 25mg BID and claim #2 is metoprolol 50mg BID, then claim #2 will adjudicate without an error.

I am adjudicating a claim that is clearly well past the one claim in 28 day time period. I am receiving a YL code? What does this mean?

This means that the authorized quantity limit has been exceeded. As part of the claims system changes to ensure the continued supply of drugs, and to prevent stockpiling, the approved quantity limits for drugs on the Maintenance Drug Schedule have been updated according to therapeutic dosing guidelines and supporting prescription claims data. For example, ethosuximide suspension has a quantity limit of 1000mL. A YL code will be generated if the quantity submitted on the claim exceeds 1000mL. If your patient requires a quantity exceeding the approved quantity, please submit a paper claim with information regarding the dosage and condition. The paper claim can be faxed to **306-787-8679**.

If a drug is listed on the Maintenance Drug Schedule, do I dispense a one month quantity and submit one claim in a 28-day period?

If the prescription allows, for drugs listed on the Maintenance Drug Schedule, pharmacists should provide a:

- **TWO MONTH** supply in a 55 day period for drugs on the Two Month Drug List.
- **100 DAY** supply in a 95 day period for drugs on the 100 Day List.

I service a Special Care Home and prepare medications in advance. Will the system allow enough time to adjudicate prescription claims without returning the HC/HD code?

Yes. The system allows pharmacies to fill the prescription as needed for individuals in a Special Care Home, and for those receiving compliance packaging through the Saskatchewan Medication Assessment Program (SMAP) or the Medication Assessment and Compliance Packaging Program.

Are all drugs subject to the quantity restrictions?

No. The following drugs are exempt from the one claim submission in 28 day restriction:

- Alzheimer's medications
- Hepatitis C drugs
- Migraine therapies
- Smoking cessation agents
- Buprenorphine/naloxone
- Methadone
- Short course of antibiotics or oral steroids

The prescriber writes a prescription to extend a short-term medication (e.g., naproxen). Will an HC/HD error code occur when the second prescription is submitted for adjudication?

Yes. An HC/HD error code will occur because it exceeds the one claim submission in 28 day criteria. You may contact the Drug Plan to request a one-time QDSE. Alternatively, you may submit a paper claim for claim #2 and indicate the details in the comments. The paper claim can be faxed to **306-787-8679**.

How long will the quantity and frequency limits be in effect?

These changes are in effect until further notice.

Saskatchewan Medication Assessment Program (SMAP)

Effective immediately, the DPEBB has extended the expiry date for follow-up assessments under the SMAP to September 30, 2020, for those individuals where the follow-up assessment Exception Drug Status (EDS) expires prior to that date.

What other changes have been implemented by the DPEBB to ensure patients have access to drug supply and drug coverage?

Refer to the *What's New* tab on the on-line Formulary at <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/SearchFormulary> for changes to DPEBB policy in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes include: extending EDS for SMAP Compliance Packaging; updating EDS criteria for select drugs requiring pulmonary function tests; and restricting hydroxychloroquine to EDS.

Who can I call for more information?

If you or your patients have any questions, please call the DPEBB at **306-787-3317** (Regina) or **1-800-667-7581** (toll-free).

What fax number is to be used for these paper claims?

Paper claims can be faxed to the DPEBB at **306-787-8679**.

Where can information be found on-line?

More information is available at the following links:

- <http://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca>; and
- the secure Drug Plan WEB page at <https://www.drugplan.health.gov.sk.ca>.