

September 2019

BC Pharmacare Biosimilar Initiative

What is changing?

In Spring 2019, BC Pharmacare launched a new Biosimilar Initiative in which reimbursement for the following three biologics; Enbrel, Remicade and Lantus, will end as of Nov 25 2019. These drugs will no longer be covered in British Columbia under the Provincial program for most conditions for which a biosimilar is available. Biosimilars are as safe and effective and much less costly than the originator biologic. (*)

RWAM Insurance Administrators will be mirroring BC's Biosimilar Initiative in order to continue to coordinate effectively with the Provincial program.

Impact to Plan Members

Plan members impacted will have seen communication from the BC Province regarding these formulary changes and action required. Communication from RWAM will be issued in September 2019 advising members who are required to transition to the respective biosimilars by November 25 to ensure there are no gaps in care. Members will be asked to discuss the transition to the biosimilar with their physician before the November deadline. Exceptions will be permitted only if a member cannot tolerate the biosimilar as determined by BC Pharmacare. RWAM will allow the exception once approved by BC Pharmacare.

If you have any questions about this change, please contact your RWAM marketing manager.

The following are links to various communications and websites regarding the BC Pharmacare Biosimilar Initiative:

BC Pharmacare Newsletter - Biosimilar Initiative Announcement

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare/newsletters/news19-003.pdf>

BC Pharmacare Biosimilar Initiative for Patients

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare-for-bc-residents/what-we-cover/drug-coverage/biosimilars-initiative-patients>

BC Pharmacare Biosimilar Initiative for Pharmacy

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/pharmacare/pharmacies/biosimilars-initiative-pharmacies>

BC Pharmacare Biosimilar Initiative for Prescribers

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/pharmacare/prescribers/biosimilars-initiative-prescribers>

* Health Canada 23 Aug 2019 - Biosimilar biologic drugs in Canada: Fact Sheet

