



National edition

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VALUE-BASED PHARMACY PHASE THREE DEFERRED TO 2022

Since we last updated you on the next phase of the Green Shield Canada (GSC) Value-based Pharmacy initiative in the March 2021 Pharmacy Update, we have been carefully evaluating the timing of phase three and, in light of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, have made the decision to defer implementation to July 2022.

Getting Canadians vaccinated is the priority

As is widely acknowledged, pharmacies across the country have played a vital and highly visible front-line role in the COVID-19 response and vaccination campaign over the last three to six months, and we expect that this will continue over the balance of 2021. As of May 31, 43.5 per cent of Canadian pharmacies were involved in the vaccination effort¹ and, with more doses of the vaccines arriving weekly, the pace of vaccination and a return to some form of normal life is expected to accelerate in the coming months. This is all great news!

Chronic disease management has suffered

Not such good news is the growing evidence that routine care, including for chronic disease management, has suffered over the course of the pandemic. Recent data² also shows that screening and diagnoses rates are lower than typically expected and that there's a growing backlog of new patients who will need future treatment for these chronic conditions. With pharmacies engaged on the COVID-19 front line, we recognize that the intense focus on the pandemic has left limited time for quality improvement and disease management efforts aimed at chronic conditions, which make up the bulk of the Value-based Pharmacy metrics.

However, as vaccination continues and, hopefully, COVID-19 recedes into the summer and fall of 2021, there is an expectation that the health care system as a whole, including pharmacists, will transition back to focus on routine care and helping patients manage chronic disease.

Looking ahead...

Deferring implementation of the third phase of the Value-based Pharmacy initiative to July 1, 2022, means that, as the pandemic recedes, pharmacists will be able to focus on quality improvements during the latter half of 2021 to positively impact patient care in high priority areas such as chronic disease. This effort would then be reflected in the July 1, 2022, reimbursement.

As the urgency of the vaccination program winds down over time, the opportunity for pharmacists to step in and

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provide much needed care for patients with chronic disease will resurface. We know pharmacists recognize this need³ and are eager to get back to caring for their patients. And you can be sure that GSC will continue to look for ways to support pharmacies by identifying plan members who could benefit from these quality improvement areas.

What's next?

Watch for more information about Value-based Pharmacy phase three in future issues of Pharmacy Update.

¹https://www.pharmacists.ca/cpha-ca/function/utilities/pdf-server.cfm?thefile=/cpha-on-the-issues/Pharmacy_Involvement_COVID_Vaccination.pdf

²IQVIA Claims Data Roundtable presented on June 1, 2021

³ <https://www.canadianhealthcarenetwork.ca/pharmacists/discussions/blogs/pharmacy-mama/time-to-get-back-to-the-practice-of-pharmacy-49543>