

PHARMACY BENEFAC^T

Number 943 • March 2021

A BULLETIN FOR PHARMACY SERVICE PROVIDERS FROM ALBERTA BLUE CROSS®

Alberta COVID-19 Pharmacy Immunization Program (ACPIP)—all pharmacies

Pharmacy enrolments

We have received enrolment forms from the majority of pharmacies across the province. We appreciate the commitment to assisting with the immunization of Albertans. Pharmacy participation initially launched with 102 locations in Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer on March 5, and will expand on March 15 to another 156 pharmacies across the province. Further expansion will occur as soon as vaccine supply allows. If you have submitted an enrolment form, you do not need to contact us to be considered for further expansion. We appreciate your patience as this program is expanded.

Phase 2 (Group A)

Starting March 15, Alberta will move into Phase 2A of the COVID-19 vaccine program. Albertans who meet the following criteria will be able to book appointments starting March 15:

- Individuals aged 65 to 74 (born between 1956 and 1947),
- First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) people aged 50 and older (born in 1971 or earlier), and
- staff and senior residents of licensed supportive living facilities not included in Phase 1

Albertans who were eligible in Phase 1 of the COVID-19 vaccine program remain eligible to receive the vaccine.

Pharmacies currently participating in the ACPIP using Pfizer vaccine will continue to use the Pfizer product and may book appointments for **ALL** eligible 2A Albertans concurrently starting March 15. This differs from AHS (online or 811) who will stagger appointment bookings based on the Albertan's year of birth.

Pharmacies that are launching their participation in the ACPIP the week of March 15 will be using Moderna vaccine and should not book appointments until their allocated vaccine quantity and the date it will be received is confirmed.

The number of appointments booked by a pharmacy must align with the amount of vaccine available in that pharmacy. An on-call/standby list should be maintained to mitigate wastage risks per the Vaccine Wastage Guidance document.

As vaccine supplies from the federal distribution to Alberta continue to increase in the weeks ahead, more pharmacies will continue to be added. We thank those pharmacies awaiting their addition to the ACPIP for their readiness to participate and plan to select as many sites as possible as vaccine supplies permit.

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Pharmacy Benefitact 942 clarification

On March 8, 2021, Pharmacy Benefitact 942 was issued regarding the storage requirements for COVID-19 vaccines. As stated, a laboratory grade refrigerator is preferred; however, if this cannot be reasonably obtained, a domestic fridge can be used in its place if specific conditions are met. Based on questions received, further clarity is being provided for the following condition:

- A successful ACP assessment has been done within the past 12 months.

The intent of this condition is to indicate that if a pharmacy assessment, completed by the Alberta College of Pharmacy (ACP) in the last 12 months, identified a deficiency in the storage of vaccine and other refrigerated pharmacy items, it is expected that the pharmacy licensee has taken remedial action to address the deficiency and has now successfully met the requirements.

Routine assessments of community pharmacies conducted by ACP are completed every two to three years, and it is recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic has limited the number of assessments over the past year that ACP practice consultants were able to conduct. A successful assessment of a community pharmacy by ACP in the prior year is not an expectation in order to participate in the ACPIP.

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area)
403-294-4041 (Calgary and area)
1-800-361-9632 (toll free)
FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area)
FAX 1-877-305-9911 (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefits and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims.

Visit ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php

