

PLAN MEMBER UPDATE



SEPTEMBER 2020

Improved process for certain drugs covered by pharmacare in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba

Green Shield Canada (GSC) has always required prior authorization for drugs covered by British Columbia's Special Authority program, and Saskatchewan's and Manitoba's Exceptional Drug Status (EDS) programs. Effective **October 1, 2020**, a new and improved process will make the prior authorization process for most of these drugs faster and more efficient. Here's what you need to know...

If you are a resident of British Columbia

British Columbia's Special Authority program pays for certain drugs that are not regular benefits of Fair PharmaCare, provided certain eligibility criteria is met. Under the current process, your physician makes a Special Authority request on your behalf and sends a copy of the decision letter to GSC. We then update our claims system with the approval or denial information, if we haven't already received this information electronically from your pharmacy. A 60-day grace period allows time for this process to be completed.

The new and improved process is effective **October 1, 2020**. Your physician will send a copy of the Special Authority decision letter to the pharmacy directly – not to GSC. Pharmacies will keep the letters on file and, when submitting claims for these drugs to GSC, will indicate electronically whether the Special Authority request has been approved or not. The existing 60-day grace period will remain in place to allow time for the pharmacy to get the letter.

If the Special Authority request is approved, GSC will coordinate benefits with Fair PharmaCare. And for some drugs, you will also need prior authorization from GSC for the drug to be covered under your benefits plan. You will receive a letter from GSC advising you of the steps to follow when one of these drugs is submitted on your behalf. The steps vary slightly depending on whether your claim was paid or not.

If you are a resident of Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan's Special Support Program provides prescription drug coverage for residents whose drug costs are high in relation to their income. The Exception Drug Status Program pays for certain drugs that are not regular benefits of the Special Support Program, provided a patient meets certain eligibility criteria. Under the current process, your physician applies to the Exception Drug Status Program on your behalf and sends a copy of the decision letter to GSC. We then update our claims system with the approval or denial information to enable claims adjudication. A 60-day grace period allows time for this process to be completed.

The new and improved process is effective **October 1, 2020**. Physicians will send a copy of the Exception Drug Status decision letter to the pharmacy directly – not to GSC. Pharmacies will keep the letters on file and, when submitting claims for these drugs to GSC electronically, will indicate whether the drug has been approved or not by the program. The existing 60-day grace period will remain in place to allow time for the pharmacy to get the letter.

If the drug is approved by the Exception Drug Status Program, GSC will coordinate benefits with the Saskatchewan Drug Plan. And for some drugs, you will also need prior authorization from GSC for the drug to be covered under your benefits plan. You will receive a letter from GSC advising you of the steps to follow when one of these drugs is submitted on your behalf. The steps vary slightly depending on whether your claim was paid or not.

If you are a resident of Manitoba

The Manitoba Pharmacare Program provides prescription drug coverage for all residents whose drug costs are high in relation to their income. The Exception Drug Status Program pays for certain drugs that are not regular benefits of the Pharmacare Program, provided a patient meets certain eligibility criteria. Under the current process, your physician applies to the Exception Drug Status Program on your behalf and sends a copy of the decision letter to GSC. We then update our claims system with the approval or denial information to enable claims adjudication. A 60-day grace period allows time for this process to be completed.

The new and improved process is effective **October 1, 2020**. Physicians will send a copy of the Exception Drug Status decision letter to the pharmacy directly – not to GSC. Pharmacies will keep the letters on file and, when submitting claims for these drugs to GSC electronically, will indicate whether the drug has been approved or not by the program. The existing 60-day grace period will remain in place to allow time for the pharmacy to get the letter.

If the drug is approved by the Exception Drug Status Program, GSC will coordinate benefits with Manitoba Pharmacare. And for some drugs, you will also need prior authorization from GSC for the drug to be covered under your benefits plan. You will receive a letter from GSC advising you of the steps to follow when one of these drugs is submitted on your behalf. The steps vary slightly depending on whether your claim was paid or not.