GSC UPDATE

June 2019

B.C. PHARMACARE'S BIOSIMILAR TRANSITION ANNOUNCEMENT AND YOUR DRUG PLAN

Recognizing that the evidence shows that biosimilars are just as safe and effective as their originator biologic counterparts, the British Columbia government announced on May 27, 2019, that BC PharmaCare is requiring that patients taking three biologic drugs – Enbrel®, Remicade®, and Lantus® – transition to biosimilars.

The British Columbia health ministry's goal is to improve the sustainability of the PharmaCare program and reduce costs – the shift to biosimilars is expected to save $96M over the first three years – as well as use the savings to add other new and/or expensive drugs to the PharmaCare formulary.

A two-phased transition...

Phase one will occur between May 27 and November 25. During this period:

- → Rheumatology patients will transition from Enbrel to the biosimilar Brenzys® or Erelzi™
- → Dermatology and rheumatology patients will transition from Remicade to the biosimilar Inflectra® or Renflexis®
- → Endocrinology patients will transition from Lantus to the biosimilar Basaglar™

Patients have until November 25, 2019, to consult with their physicians to change their prescriptions to the applicable biosimilar. After that, PharmaCare will no longer provide coverage for these originator biologics for the affected indications, except in exceptional situations.

Green Shield Canada's (GSC's) biosimilar strategy: developed in 2016

With biologic drugs as one of the fastest growing areas in pharmaceutical development (and drug spend), GSC has been at the forefront of industry discussions around the growing body of evidence supporting safe and effective transitioning of patients from an originator biologic to its biosimilar. As a pharmacy benefit manager with a focus on transparent savings and long-term sustainability, GSC, unlike other large carriers, made the decision back in 2016 **not** to enter into product listing agreements with biologic drug manufacturers to the detriment of the emerging biosimilars industry. Instead, the focus of our biosimilar strategy has been driving uptake in the Canadian market to the benefit of plan members and sponsors. That decision now allows us to adapt our existing biosimilar strategy to ensure we can integrate our efforts with those of the British Columbia government.

GSC launched our industry-leading, optional Biosimilar Transition Program back in December 2018 following the successful completion of a pilot. This program initially focused on Remicade for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, and psoriatic arthritis, and Enbrel for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis. The goal of the program was to successfully transition plan members diagnosed with these conditions from the originator biologic product to the corresponding biosimilar product. If the member chose to stay on the originator, the claim would be priced to the cost of the biosimilar. In addition to the savings generated, the transition program ensured appropriate coordination with provincial drug plans. This last part becomes important in our ability to now respond to the announcement from British Columbia to begin transitioning patients to biosimilars over the next six months.

DRUG	ORIGINATOR	BIOSIMILAR	INDICATIONS
etanercept	Enbrel	Brenzys	ankylosing spondylitis rheumatoid arthritis
		Erelzi	ankylosing spondylitis psoriatic arthritis rheumatoid arthritis
infliximab	Remicade	Inflectra Renflexis	ankylosing spondylitis plaque psoriasis psoriatic arthritis rheumatoid arthritis
insulin glargine	Lantus	Basaglar	diabetes (type 1 and 2)

Patients using Enbrel for plaque psoriasis are not affected at this time.

Phase two transition dates will be announced in the coming months. During phase two, gastrointestinal patients will transition from Remicade to the biosimilar Inflectra or Renflexis.

DRUG	ORIGINATOR	BIOSIMILAR	INDICATIONS
infliximab	Remicade	Inflectra Renflexis	Crohn's disease ulcerative colitis

What does this mean for GSC plan members in British Columbia?

By November 25, 2019, all GSC plan members in British Columbia taking originator drugs for the listed conditions will be transitioned to the corresponding biosimilar in accordance with GSC's provincial coordination policies. To ensure GSC is aligned with the provincial coverage, GSC is adapting our Biosimilar Transition Program for all plan members who are residents of British Columbia and are covered under the PharmaCare program.

GSC will be issuing letters to affected plan members in August advising them to discuss a transition to the biosimilar with their physicians before the November 25 deadline. If the drug is a BC Special Authority medication, the plan member will simply need a new prescription from their physician – they do not need to reapply for Special Authority. In addition, if PharmaCare grants an exception to allow someone to remain on the originator, GSC will follow suit, and pay for the originator as well. At this time, the focus of our program in British Columbia will be limited to individuals coordinating with PharmaCare.

This is what the Biosimilar Transition Program will look like in British Columbia:

	Biosimilar Transition Program – British Columbia	Biosimilar Transition Program – All other provinces/territories (excluding Quebec)
Program	Standard	Optional
Focus	Claimants coordinating with PharmaCare	Claimants where GSC is the primary payor
Option to continue on originator biologic	No – claim will be denied	Yes – claim will be paid to the cost of the corresponding biosimilar
Rheumatology patients on Remicade and Enbrel: → rheumatoid arthritis → ankylosing spondylitis → psoriatic arthritis	Yes – plan members will need to transition by November 25	Yes – currently in place
Dermatology patients on Remicade: → plaque psoriasis	Yes – plan members will need to transition by November 25	Yes – implementation planned for June
Gastrointestinal patients on Remicade: → Crohn's disease → ulcerative colitis	Yes – plan member will need to transition (implementation will follow B.C. timelines to be announced in the coming months)	Yes – will follow B.C. implementation
Diabetes patients on Lantus: → type 1 diabetes → type 2 diabetes	Yes – plan members will need to transition by November 25	Yes – implementation details to be shared at a later date
HealthForward case management	Not available (fee will not be charged)	Yes (fee will be charged)

What does this mean for your drug plan?

GSC's adapted Biosimilar Transition Program will become standard for all plan members in British Columbia coordinating with PharmaCare effective November 26, 2019. We would urge that you also implement the optional GSC Biosimilar Transition Program in the other provinces and territories, which several GSC clients have done to good effect over the past two years.

Questions?

Don't hesitate to speak to your account team about British Columbia's biosimilar transition and its impact on GSC's Biosimilar Transition Program and your plan.