



PharmacareNEWS

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Nova Scotia Formulary Updates

New Pharmacare Tariff and Pharmacy Service Agreements

The Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness is pleased that two new agreements have been signed with the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia (PANS) to support continued and expanded government funding of pharmacy services in the province.

Pharmacare Tariff Agreement

The new Pharmacare Tariff Agreement determines the reimbursement of pharmacy services through Nova Scotia's Pharmacare Programs and is effective October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024. Highlights of the new Tariff Agreement include:

- An increase of 1.2% a year in dispensing fees starting April 1, 2020
- Effective April 1, 2020, a reduction in mark-up on brand name drugs from 10.5% to 10% and a maximum mark-up of \$325 on all drugs

Pharmacy Service Agreement

The new Pharmacy Service Agreement will give Nova Scotians better access to primary care by compensating pharmacists to assess and prescribe in specific situations and renew prescriptions within their scope of practice as authorized by the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists in its *Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs*. The new agreement is effective October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024. Highlights of the new Pharmacy Service Agreement include:

- An increase of \$0.40 for flu vaccine administration starting April 1, 2020, followed by annual increases of \$0.15 a year
- \$400,000 a year for PANS to conduct pharmacy Demonstration Projects
- New professional service fees for:
 - Assessment and prescribing for uncomplicated cystitis (\$20 per assessment)
 - Assessment and prescribing for herpes zoster (\$20 per assessment)

New Pharmacare Tariff and Pharmacy Service Agreements Continued...

- Contraception management assessment and prescribing (\$20 or \$12 per assessment)
- Prescription renewals by pharmacists (\$12 or \$20 per renewal)

To bill under the terms of the new agreements, pharmacies must sign and submit *Confirmation of Agreement* forms to Medavie Blue Cross by **January 31, 2020**. The forms can be downloaded as part of the new **Pharmacy Guide** available online at: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/pharmacare/>

Public Funding of New Pharmacy Professional Services to Start January 1, 2020

The new Pharmacy Service Agreement gives Nova Scotians better access to primary care by compensating pharmacists to renew prescriptions and to assess and prescribe for specific health care needs.

All services must be performed in compliance with the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists' *Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs* to be eligible for coverage. All residents with a valid Nova Scotia health card are eligible for coverage, except residents of nursing homes.

For each resident, there is a maximum number of services that are eligible for coverage within any 12-month timeframe. Pharmacists are expected to advise customers of the maximum number of services that are publicly funded as part of obtaining their verbal or written consent to perform the service.

DHW is the "payer of last resort" for all services under the Pharmacy Service Agreement, meaning residents must first use their available insurance coverage before any portion of the professional fee can be billed to DHW. Further, the agreement covers only the pharmacist professional fees associated with the services. Residents will continue to access their usual drug coverage or method of payment for any prescriptions they have filled.

For information on the professional service fees, maximum number of services per resident, claims criteria and additional funding eligibility requirements, please refer to the newly updated **Pharmacy Guide** online at: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/pharmacare/>

Pharmacists are expected to review the Pharmacy Guide in detail and be aware of all eligibility criteria for public coverage and related audit requirements for the new pharmacy services.

Starting January 1

As of January 1, 2020, DHW will be providing public funding for assessment and prescribing by a pharmacist for:

- Uncomplicated cystitis
- Herpes zoster
- Contraception management

When the above services do not result in a prescription, pharmacists are expected to provide supporting documentation for why a prescription was not written by the pharmacist. Please refer to the **Pharmacy Guide** for requirements.

Starting April 1

As of April 1, 2020, DHW will be providing public funding for prescription renewals by a pharmacist.

Introducing the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness *Pharmacy Guide*

Following the signing of a new Pharmacare Tariff Agreement and a new Pharmacy Service Agreement with PANS, the former *Pharmacare Programs Pharmacists' Guide* has been updated and replaced with the **Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness Pharmacy Guide**.

The new guide provides a central reference for all provincial government-funded services for Pharmacare beneficiaries and the general public. The guide contains important information on services that are eligible for coverage, criteria for coverage, the applicable fees, maximum coverage available, and the documentation and audit requirements. This important resource will ensure your pharmacy delivers services that meet the requirements for public funding and that your clients have access to the full range of services for which they are eligible under the new agreements.

Review the new **Pharmacy Guide** online at: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/pharmacare/>