

November 18, 2022

Dear Health Care Providers:

RE: Saskatchewan Biosimilars Initiative – Patient Communications and Patient List Request Form

As you may be aware, the Saskatchewan Biosimilars Initiative was announced on October 20, 2022 (see enclosed **Letter to Health Care Providers**).

The Biosimilars Initiative includes ten drugs listed on the Saskatchewan Formulary: adalimumab (Humira®), enoxaparin (Lovenox®), etanercept (Enbrel®), filgrastim (Neupogen®), glatiramer (Copaxone®), infliximab (Remicade®), insulin aspart (NovoRapid®), insulin glargine (Lantus®), insulin lispro (Humalog®), and rituximab (Rituxan®). The policy will also apply to future reference biologics as new biosimilars are launched and listed on the Saskatchewan Formulary. See [Formulary Bulletin #221](#) for more details.

Established patients already receiving a reference biologic drug (or “originator” biologic) with an available biosimilar version will be required to use a biosimilar version by **April 30, 2023**, in order to maintain coverage under the Saskatchewan Drug Plan.

Please refer to the following clarifications and resources to support health care providers and patients through this change. Feel free to share this information with your colleagues who may be helping patients transition to biosimilars.

Prescriptions:

- At this time, biosimilars are not listed as interchangeable with the reference biologic on the Saskatchewan Formulary. They cannot be substituted at the pharmacy level.
- Prescriptions must clearly indicate the biosimilar brand to be dispensed by the pharmacy.

Exception Drug Status (EDS) Coverage:

- A new EDS application is not required for your patient to start using a biosimilar.
- Where applicable, EDS coverage for the listed biosimilars has now been added for patients who have current EDS coverage for an affected reference biologic. Their EDS coverage for the reference biologic will be terminated on April 30, 2023.
- Health care providers can confirm a patient’s EDS coverage on their Pharmaceutical Information Program (PIP) profile.

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Patient Notification:

- The Saskatchewan Drug Plan will be sending a letter to affected patients notifying them of the Biosimilars Initiative policy and resulting EDS coverage updates. Letters will include an information sheet on biosimilars and refer patients to other resources.
- Prescribers will be informed when letters are mailed to affected patients.
- The letters will direct patients to do the following before April 30, 2023:
 - o Continue using their reference biologic according to the prescriber's instructions.
 - o Follow up with the health care provider who prescribes their reference biologic at their next scheduled appointment, or contact their provider's office if they do not have an appointment booked before April 30, 2023.
 - o Get a new prescription for a biosimilar version of their medication.
 - o Discuss their questions about biosimilars with their doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

Exemptions and Extensions:

- The Saskatchewan Biosimilars Initiative includes a provision for exemptions to the policy where patients must remain on the reference biologic for medical reasons.
- An Exemption Request Form is being developed and will be posted to our webpage.
- Prescribers can contact sk.biosimilars@health.gov.sk.ca or call 1-800-667-2549 (option #3) if they have questions related to the transition timeline.

List of Patients for Prescribers:

- An enclosed **Patient List Request Form** is now available for prescribers to request a list of patients who may need to start using a biosimilar to maintain Drug Plan coverage.
- The list will include patients who have received a recent prescription claim for the affected reference biologics.

Guide for Patients:

- A **Guide for Patients** is available to provide information for patients on biosimilars and the Saskatchewan Biosimilars Initiative (enclosed and posted on our webpage).

Please do not hesitate to contact us about the Saskatchewan Biosimilars Initiative at sk.biosimilars@health.gov.sk.ca, or 1-800-667-2549 (306-787-8744 in Regina), option #3.

Additional information and resources on biosimilars and the Saskatchewan Biosimilars Initiative are available for patients and health care providers at:
www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/prescription-drug-plans-and-health-coverage/extended-benefits-and-drug-plan/biosimilars.

Drug Plan and Extended Benefits

Enclosures