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Pharmacare Plans

Residents of British Columbia are eligible for Pharmacare benefits under one the following categories:

- Plan A - Seniors aged 65 and over
- Plan B - Permanent residents of licensed long-term care facilities
- Plan C - Individuals eligible for benefits through the Ministry for Human Resources
- Plan D - Individuals registered with a provincial Cystic Fibrosis Clinic
- Plan E - All other residents of the province under the age of 65 registered under the Medical Services Plan of B.C.
- Plan F - Children eligible for medical or full benefits through the At Home Program of the Ministry for Children and Family Development
- Plan G - Clients eligible for benefits through mental health centres

When am I not covered by Pharmacare?

- When you move away from B.C., Pharmacare coverage ceases the day you leave the province.
- Residents who are temporarily absent from B.C., are not eligible for coverage of any drugs or supplies purchased outside the province.
- Mail-order prescriptions requested from pharmacies located outside of B.C. are not covered.
- Pharmacare does not pay for vacation supplies of medications or for repeat prescriptions required by patients for extended absence from British Columbia.
- Cancer treatment medications are provided through the British Columbia Cancer Agency and associated hospital pharmacies. For more information, click on the link to visit the [British Columbia Cancer Agency Web site](#).
- Medications used in the treatment of transplant patients are provided through the British Columbia Transplant Society. For more information, click on the link to visit the [British Columbia Transplant Society Web site](#).
- Medications used in the treatment of kidney dialysis patients are provided through the British Columbia Provincial Renal Agency. For more information, click on the link to visit the [British Columbia](#)

[Renal Agency Web site.](#)

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PDF Format

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PLAN DESCRIPTIONS

Seniors (Plan A)

If you are a resident of B.C. and are 65 years or older, you are eligible for benefits under Pharmacare's plan for seniors.

How do I qualify?

To qualify for these benefits, you should have a British Columbia CareCard for seniors. A special gold CareCard will be sent to you a few weeks before your 65th birthday if you are registered with the [Medical Services Plan \(MSP\) of B.C.](#)

If you are age 65 or older and are not registered with the MSP plan, you can obtain a CareCard by contacting the MSP at (250) 386-7171 (long distance outside of Greater Victoria). You can access automated information about MSP by calling (250) 382-8406 (Victoria), (604) 683-7151 (Vancouver) or 1-800-663-7171 (rest of B.C.).

How do I use the CareCard?

When you order your prescription, simply present your gold CareCard to the pharmacist.

Effective January 1, 2002, if you qualify for **regular Plan A**, you will pay a maximum of \$25 towards the cost of eligible drugs* and the dispensing fee for that prescription. When you have paid \$275 towards the cost of eligible benefits and dispensing fees within a calendar year, Pharmacare will cover 100 per cent of the eligible drug costs and dispensing fees for the remainder of the year.

If you qualify for the **Plan A for individuals receiving MSP Premium Assistance**, you will pay a maximum of \$10 towards the cost of eligible drugs* and the dispensing fee for that prescription. When you have paid \$200 towards the cost of eligible benefits and dispensing fees within a calendar year, Pharmacare will cover 100 per cent of further eligible costs and dispensing fees for the remainder of the year.

* If a drug is not covered by Pharmacare, you will pay the full drug cost and the dispensing fee. If the cost of the drug or dispensing fee is in excess of the Pharmacare maximum price or maximum dispensing fee, you will be required to pay the difference.

Residents of Licensed Long-Term Care Facilities (Plan B)

Pharmacare pays the full cost for eligible prescription drugs and certain medical supplies for residents of

licensed long-term care facilities in B.C.

Each residential facility is served by a contracted pharmacy and paid on a per diem basis under the *British Columbia Pharmacare Pharmacy Participation Agreement* for the provision of pharmaceutical services to long-term care facilities. Bylaw 37 of the Council of the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia, as specified in the *Pharmacists, Pharmacy Operations and Drug Scheduling Act* defines the standards required for services provided to continuing care facilities.

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Recipients of British Columbia Benefits (Plan C)

This plan provides coverage to B.C. residents eligible for medical benefits through the [Ministry of Human Resources](#). The pharmacy will be paid for the full prescription cost directly from Pharmacare.

If you would like further information on social assistance medical benefits, contact your local Ministry of Human Resources office.

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Cystic Fibrosis (Plan D)

Individuals with Cystic Fibrosis who are registered with a provincial cystic fibrosis clinic receive digestive enzymes free of charge through Plan D when prescribed by a physician at the clinic. The enzymes are dispensed through your community pharmacy.

Additional eligible cystic fibrosis items, such as nutritional supplements and vitamins, are not covered under Plan D, but may be covered under other relevant Pharmacare plans for eligible individuals.

Contact your nearest cystic fibrosis clinic for more information.

A list of digestive enzymes and nutritional supplements covered for the treatment of cystic fibrosis is available at [Cystic Fibrosis Formulary](#).

Contact the PharmaNet [help desk](#) for information on products not listed.

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Universal (Plan E)

The universal plan provides coverage for all residents of the province who are not receiving benefits under Pharmacare Plans A, B or C. It also covers eligible medications and medical supplies not covered under Plan D or G. Coverage under this plan is based on the total eligible expenses for a family, rather than for an individual.

Effective January 1, 2002, under **regular Plan E**, the current annual deductible is \$1,000. When the total expenses for eligible prescription drugs and other benefits for your family reach the annual deductible, Pharmacare automatically covers 70 per cent of the cost of further eligible benefit items for the remainder of the year. Once a family has paid \$2,000 in costs recognized by Pharmacare, any further eligible costs are covered 100 per cent.

Under **Plan E for individuals receiving MSP Premium Assistance**, the current annual deductible is \$800. When the total expenses for eligible prescription drugs and other benefits for your family reach the annual deductible, Pharmacare automatically covers 100 per cent of the cost of further eligible benefit items for the remainder of the year.

If you think you may qualify for premium assistance, contact the [Medical Services Plan](#) for additional information.

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Children in the At Home Program (Plan F)

The At Home program provides community-based, family-style care for severely handicapped children who would otherwise become reliant on institutional care.

Children who are eligible either for medical or full benefits under this program are entitled to obtain eligible prescribed drugs and certain medical supplies at no charge through the Pharmacare program. Contact the [Ministry for Children and Family Development](#) for more information.

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No-Charge Psychiatric Medication Program (Plan G)

The No-Charge Psychiatric Medication Program (Plan G) is available to assist low-income residents for whom the cost of psychiatric medication is a serious barrier to treatment and who, without medication, would suffer serious consequences such as hospitalization. Only patients receiving [Medical Services Plan](#) premium assistance qualify for coverage under the program. Individuals approved for coverage receive eligible psychiatric medications at no charge.

A patient's physician or psychiatrist must submit an Application for Psychiatric Medication Coverage to a mental health service centre for approval. For forms and information, contact your local mental health services centre (listed in the blue pages of your telephone directory under "Health Authorities").

Recommendations for additions or deletions to the formulary may be made by any physician or pharmacist by contacting [Adult Mental Health Policy](#) at (250) 952-1629.

A few medications covered under Plan G require prior approval via the [Special Authority](#) process. These drugs are listed by generic name only. Click on the applicable drug to view the criteria used to determine

Special Authority acceptance. If a person meets the criteria requirements, click on the form link to access the Special Authority request form, which is then completed by the practitioner and forwarded to Pharmacare.

View Formulary Table: [Formulary](#)

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Palliative Care Drug Plan

On behalf of the *British Columbia Palliative Care Benefits Program*, which is funded as a continuing care service, the drug plan covers the costs of medications listed in the *Palliative Care Drug Formulary* for eligible patients. For information, contact your physician, local [health authority](#), or the [British Columbia Hospice Palliative Care Association](#).

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Home Oxygen Program

Effective May 1, 2002, the Home Oxygen Program, formerly administered by Pharmacare, has been transferred to the British Columbia health authorities.

For information, contact the appropriate [health authority](#).

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Antiretroviral Medications used to treat HIV/AIDS

The B.C. Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS operates from St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, B.C. St. Paul's is a leading institution providing care to more than 65 per cent of the seropositive people in the province.

The centre provides education to health care providers, conducts natural history and observational studies, develops innovative laboratory tests, and carries out clinical trials. Its drug program is at the core of the centre's activities. HIV-positive persons living in British Columbia receive their antiretroviral drugs free of charge when enrolled in this program. The centre is fully supported by the B.C. Ministry of Health Services and the Pharmacare program supports the drug cost portion of the centre. For more information, visit the [Centre for Excellence](#) Web site.

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