

Ontario Public Drug Programs Division

Proposal to amend Ontario Regulation 201/96 under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act* to update cost-sharing arrangements for non-low income seniors under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program

February 29, 2016

Patients First: Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care reflects a commitment on the part of the ministry to build a health-care system that is patient-centered. A sustainable drug system, working together with our partners, puts Ontario in the best position to ensure access for patients to drug products that they require.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the “ministry”) is proposing to update recipient cost-sharing arrangements for non-low income seniors as well as expand eligibility for the Seniors Co-Payment Program under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program, in order to reflect increases in cost-of-living and seniors’ income supplements in Ontario since the co-payment and annual deductible rates were set. Introduced in 1996, these are the first changes in 20 years.

Proposed amendments to Ontario Regulation 201/96 made under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act* are required to support these proposed changes, which include:

- An increase to the income threshold for low-income seniors from <\$16,018 to ≤\$19,300 for single seniors and from <\$24,175 to ≤\$32,300 for senior couples in order to expand access to the ODB program’s Seniors Co-Payment Program (SCP). The SCP reduces low-income seniors’ out-of-pocket drug costs to a \$0 annual deductible and up to a \$2 co-payment per prescription;
- \$70 increase to non-low income seniors’ annual deductible (from \$100 to \$170); and
- \$1 increase to non-low income seniors’ co-payment per prescription (from \$6.11 to \$7.11).

Housekeeping changes to Ontario Regulation 201/96 made under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act*

Housekeeping changes to Ontario Regulation 201/96 are also included in this amendment and pertain to pharmacy claim submissions under the ODB program. The minor changes include:

- Removing outdated dispensing physician offsets; and
- Revising the two dispensing fee per month (30 days) policy to two dispensing fees per 28 days.

A copy of the draft regulation that proposes to amend Ontario Regulation 201/96 is available on the Regulatory Registry website at:

<http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=21062&language=en>

The content of the final regulations are at the discretion of the Lieutenant Governor in Council (“LGIC”) who may make the regulations with any changes that the LGIC considers appropriate.

Interested parties are invited to provide written comments on the proposed changes to the regulations as part of the review. The ministry will consider comments received on or before **March 30, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. EST** (“comment period.”). Please be advised that submissions received after the comment period may not be considered.

Please submit your written comments to:

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Statement about Comments

Unless requested and otherwise agreed to by the ministry, all materials or comments received from organizations in response to the notice will be considered public information and may be used and disclosed by the ministry as part of its review. The ministry may disclose materials or comments, or summaries of them, to other interested parties during and after the comment period.

An individual who makes a submission and who indicates an affiliation with an organization in his or her submission will be considered to have made his or her submission on behalf of the affiliated organization. The ministry will not disclose any personal information contained in a submission of an individual who does not specify an organizational affiliation in his or her submission without the individual’s consent unless required by law. However, the ministry may use and disclose the content of the individual’s submission to assist the ministry in its review.

If you have any questions about the collection of this information, you can contact the ministry’s Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator at (416) 327-7040.