

Ontario Public Drug Programs

Notice from the Executive Officer: Proposal to amend Ontario Regulation 201/96 made under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act* to Create and Implement OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare Program

July 11, 2017

As part of the 2017 Budget and the government's ongoing commitment to provide better and faster access to high-quality health services, Ontario is proposing to create the OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare Program.

Under the program, the province would, as of January 1, 2018, provide drug coverage for children and youth who are covered by OHIP and aged 24 or under, regardless of family income. Over four million Ontario children and youth would have publicly funded access to over 4,400 drug products.

Enrollment in OHIP+ would be automatic based on age and OHIP coverage, and eligible drug products would be available at no cost. There would be no applications necessary to join the program and no upfront costs to acquire eligible medications at a pharmacy. Those who are eligible for the program would only need to have their health card number and a valid prescription starting January 1, 2018.

The program would cover all drugs currently covered through the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program. This includes more than 4,400 drug products listed on the ODB Formulary/Comparative Drug Index and additional drugs eligible for funding through the Exceptional Access Program (EAP).

Amendments to O. Reg. 201/96 made under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act* (ODBA) are required to create and implement the program. The proposed regulatory amendments would:

- prescribe persons who have OHIP coverage and are aged 24 or under as a class of “eligible persons” for the purposes of the ODB Program;
- specify that no co-payment may be charged to ODB-eligible persons who are under 25; and
- prescribe the implementation of OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare Program as a purpose for which the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care may collect, use and disclose personal information under section 13 of the ODBA.

Covering the cost of eligible prescription medication for children and youth is part of Ontario’s Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care, which is increasing access to care, reducing wait times and improving the patient experience.

A copy of the proposed regulatory amendments and summary of the proposed amendments are available on the Regulatory Registry website at:

<http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=24432&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 August 10, 2017 at midnight EST (“comment period”). Please be advised that submissions received after the comment period may not be considered.

Additional Information:

For pharmacies:

Please call ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

For all other Health Care Providers and the Public:

Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282