

FAQs for Dispensers on the Regulatory Amendments to Ontario Drug Benefit Program Co-Payments during the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. What does this change mean for dispensers?

Dispensers will continue to submit eligible claims to the ODB program as before.

For the period of May 13, 2020 to June 30, 2020, for prescriptions for a 30+ days' supply that are being dispensed in instalments in response to the [Ministry's recommendation on March 20](#), the recipient's co-payment is zero. As a result, dispensers cannot charge recipients co-payments for these dispensing instalments.

The recipient's regular co-payment amount (i.e. \$2 or \$6.11, in most cases) will be payable by the Ministry. Dispensers can receive this payment by submitting a second claim to the Ministry with a PIN (see Question #4 for details).

These changes apply until the Ministry's supply limit recommendation ends or until the end of June 30, 2020, whichever occurs first.

For example, if a prescription was for a 90-day supply and is being dispensed 30 days at a time because of the Ministry's supply limit recommendation, the recipient is not required to pay a co-payment for the dispensing events between May 13th, 2020 and June 30th, 2020. The dispenser can receive reimbursement for the co-payment that is no longer payable by the recipient by submitting a claim using the PIN for each dispensing event.

Dispensers that dispense prescriptions to ODB recipients for a 30-day supply or less, or prescriptions dispensed more frequently for non-COVID related reasons (e.g. cognitive impairment) may still collect a co-payment from recipients as per Ontario Regulation 201/96 and ODB policy guidelines. Pharmacies may therefore continue to charge these recipients their regular co-payment as before.

A pharmacy may not charge an ODB recipient or any other person an amount greater than the maximum co-payment set out in Ontario Regulation 201/96. As the co-payment is now zero for prescriptions for more than a 30-day supply that are being dispensed in instalments in response to the Ministry's recommendation on March 20, no amount may be charged to another third-party payor either.

2. What does this change mean for ODB recipients?

The ministry's recommendation to limit ODB-eligible prescriptions to a 30-day supply during the pandemic was not meant to cause additional financial burden on patients. The changes now help ensure that ODB recipients will continue to be able to afford their medications.

Effective May 13th, 2020 until June 30th, 2020 ODB recipients will not pay a co-payment for a prescription that is for more than a 30-day supply of medication and is being dispensed in instalments due to the ministry's supply limit recommendation. Co-payments for such prescriptions have been reduced to \$0 for this time period.

Dispensers that dispense prescriptions to ODB recipients for a 30-day supply or less, or prescriptions dispensed more frequently for non-COVID related reasons (e.g. cognitive impairment) may still collect a co-payment from recipients as per Ontario Regulation 201/96 and ODB policy guidelines. Pharmacies may therefore continue to charge these recipients their regular co-payment as before.

3. Since the 30-day supply limit for medications was recommended on March 20, 2020, I have already dispensed the 2nd instalment of medication. Will I be required to refund the co-payment that I previously collected from the ODB recipient and will I be able to submit the PIN?

No, the changes are effective as of May 13th, 2020 and are not applicable to any dispensing event that occurred prior to the regulation coming into effect. The claims for the PINs should be submitted on the same day but can be submitted up to seven (7) days from when the drug claim was dispensed.

4. How will claims be submitted for reimbursement through the ODB program?

For each ODB-eligible drug product for which a 30+ days' supply was prescribed or was payable under the ODB program but was then dispensed in instalments because of the ministry's supply limit recommendation during the pandemic, 2 HNS claims will be submitted as follows:

1) One claim for the ODB-eligible drug dispensed: For the reduced quantity dispensing event, the drug claim is submitted and is payable as per normal process, however the patient cannot be charged a co-payment.

2) One claim using the appropriate PIN: Pharmacies will submit a second claim with a PIN (described in the table below) in order to be reimbursed the patient's regular co-

payment amount. The second claim should be submitted on the same day but must be submitted within seven (7) days from the initial drug claim submission being dispensed.

To receive reimbursement for each regular co-payment amount using a PIN, the normal process for submitting claims on the Health Network System will be used with the following additional information:

- Intervention code 'PS': (Professional Care Services)
- PIN: as per the recipient's regular co-payment (see Table 1)
- Valid Pharmacist ID

The PIN to be used will correspond to the normal co-payment for the ODB recipient or dispensing physician.

Table 1: Co-Payment Reimbursement PINs for each instalment of a reduced quantity due to the ministry's supply limit recommendation

Category	Amount of Payment	PIN
Non-SCP Seniors – Community Pharmacy	\$6.11	09858112
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors' Co-payment Program (SCP) • Trillium Drug Program • Ontario Works (25 years of age and older) • Ontario Disability Support Program (25 years of age and older) • Home Care (25 years of age and older) • Resident of Home for Special Care or Community Home for Opportunity (25 years of age and older) 	\$2.00	09858113
Non-SCP Seniors - Hospital Out-Patient Dispensary	\$2.83	09858111
Non-SCP Seniors - Dispensing Physician (within 20km from accredited pharmacy)	\$4.28	09858110
Non-SCP Seniors - Dispensing Physician (over 20 km from accredited pharmacy)	\$5.10	09858114

The submission of the PIN for each eligible drug product prescribed for 30+ days but dispensed in instalments is a temporary process that applies until the ministry's supply limit recommendation ends or until the end of June 30, 2020, whichever occurs first. Overpayments due to inappropriate claim submissions with the PINs are subject to recovery.

Note: If more than one claim using the Co-Payment Reimbursement PINs is submitted for payment on the same day for the same patient, the HNS will reject the second PIN claim

with response code **“A3” - Identical claim processed** which can be overridden with the intervention code **“UF” - patient gave adequate explanation, Rx filled as written**. Subsequent claims using the same PIN for the same patient on the same day at the same pharmacy can be overridden using the same intervention code as long as there is a corresponding claim for an ODB eligible product (e.g., If an ODB recipient requires 3 medications, a reduced quantity of 30-days supply of each is dispensed of a reduced quantity prescription due to the ministry’s supply limit recommendation during the pandemic, 3 secondary claims for the co-payment reimbursement will be submitted using the appropriate PIN above according the patient’s normal co-payment amount).

5. The ODB recipient has a prescription for 45 days or 60 days supply of a medication. Can I submit a PIN for the next instalment of the 15-day or 30-day supply?

Yes. As the original prescription was for more than a 30-day supply and the quantity was reduced as per the ministry’s supply limit recommendation, when the remaining 15 or 30 day supply is dispensed, you cannot collect the recipient co-payment and are allowed to submit a claim for the co-payment reimbursement with the corresponding PIN. Depending on the ODB recipients’ individual circumstances, and the quantity by which the prescription exceeds 30 days, pharmacists may also use their discretion and dispense the entire amount at once, instead of dispensing a second installment for 15 days (for example). If the entire amount is dispensed at one time, then the regular co-payment may be charged to the recipient and no separate PIN claim can be submitted to the Ministry.

6. In what circumstances can I dispense more than a 30-day supply of medication if the prescription was for a larger quantity?

Pharmacists and dispensing physicians should always use their professional judgment to determine if a longer days’ supply is required and document appropriately (e.g., patient is required to be in self-isolation or quarantine or is unable to get to the pharmacy before their supply runs out). The ministry’s recommendation that pharmacists and dispensing physicians dispense no more than a 30-day supply if possible, was to ensure that there is an adequate supply of medications for all Ontarians during the pandemic. The recommendation was not meant to prevent patient access to medications. Pharmacies and dispensing physicians should manage their inventory to avoid stockpiling to lessen the risk that other pharmacies will not be able to provide medications to their patients.

7. How does this change affect early refills?

The ministry’s policy for refilling a prescription for an ODB recipient is no more than ten days in advance of depleting their current supply. In exceptional cases where there is a clinical reason to refill a prescription early, the pharmacist or dispensing physician, using their professional judgement may provide a refill and document the reason.

Pharmacy staff and dispensing physicians should continue to reassure patients that stockpiling is not necessary. Measures to limit the quantity of medications received at one time will help ensure that all Ontarians have access to the medications they need.