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## Multi-Year Pharmacy Funding Framework Update

### *Maintenance Medication Dispensing Policy and Maintenance Medication List*

As part of the new multi-year Pharmacy Funding Framework, Alberta Blue Cross has now released details of the new Maintenance Medication Dispensing Policy and Maintenance Medication List (MML), which take effect October 1, 2026.

Under the new policy, Maintenance Medications used for chronic or long-term conditions are generally expected to be dispensed for 84 to 100 days once a patient is stabilized on therapy. The MML identifies medication categories that will be adjudicated through the Alberta Blue Cross claims system for application of these dispensing fee rules.

Key points include:

- A dispensing fee will continue to be paid for Maintenance Medications dispensed for 84 to 100 days, subject to the existing early refill limit.
- Where a Maintenance Medication is dispensed for less than 84 days, specific patient eligibility, documentation and claiming requirements must be met for a dispensing fee to be paid. For medications on the MML, an applicable intervention code will also be required.
- A Maintenance Medications Frequent Dispensing Authorization Form must be completed before claiming a dispensing fee for a Maintenance Medication supplied for less than 84 days. The form must be signed by the patient or patient's agent and the pharmacist, a copy must be provided to the patient, and it must be renewed every 12 months.
  - For a newly prescribed Maintenance Medication or dose change, up to three initial dispenses of less than 84 days may receive a dispensing fee without the authorization form or MML intervention code.
  - For eligible shorter dispensing, claims for 2–27 days are limited to two dispensing fees per 28 days per Active Ingredient Group Form and Route (AFR), while claims for 28–83 days are limited to one dispensing fee per 28 days per AFR.

The policy applies to dispensing fee remuneration and does not determine how often a pharmacist may dispense a prescription. Pharmacists continue to determine the clinically appropriate dispensing interval in collaboration with the patient and other health-care providers.

Refer to the following resources before October 1:

- [Maintenance Medication Program Drug Listing](#)
- [Maintenance Medications Frequent Dispensing Authorization Form](#)
- [Maintenance Medication Dispensing Policy FAQ](#)
- [Alberta Blue Cross Benefact #1337](#) – Maintenance Medication Dispensing Policy and introduction of a Maintenance Medication List

[Details of all the agreement changes](#) are on the RxA website.

**Notice of Changes to the Alberta Blue Cross Pharmaceutical Services Provider Agreement**

Alberta Blue Cross has issued a formal Notice of Changes to pharmacies outlining amendments to the Alberta Blue Cross Pharmaceutical Services Provider Agreement that take effect October 1, 2026. There is no requirement to sign or return the Notice of Changes.

The amendments incorporate several elements of the new multi-year Pharmacy Funding Framework into the Agreement, including:

- extending the applicable agreement provisions through March 31, 2029;
- updating the maximum dispensing fee to \$12.35 for dispenses of less than 84 days and \$13.50 for dispenses of 84 days or greater beginning October 1, 2026; and
- updating provisions related to OTC pricing of products and frequent dispensing.

The updated Agreement continues the provisions for the Authorized Adjustment, which may be applied to eligible drug benefit and Pharmacy Service claims in accordance with a government-approved policy. The Authorized Adjustment is a mechanism to constrain expenditure growth within the government's projected budget for drug benefits and Pharmacy Services should expenditures approach the budget cap for that year.

[A copy can be found on our website.](#)

Additional details regarding other components (Daily Dispensing and Compounds) of the Pharmacy Funding Framework will continue to be communicated as they are finalized.

## Fall Immunization Program Update

Alberta Blue Cross has released [Pharmacy Benefact 1338](#) with important updates for the 2026–27 fall [immunization program](#), including COVID-19, influenza and RSV program information.

Key points include:

- The general public influenza and targeted administration to eligible individuals for COVID-19 immunization will begin October 19, 2026.
- Pharmacies will receive COVID-19 vaccine for eligible Albertans 12 years of age and older, while children 6 months to 11 years must be referred to Primary Care Alberta public health clinics for COVID-19 immunization.
- Provincially funded COVID-19 vaccine eligibility includes only:
  - all adults 65 years of age and older,
  - individuals (6mos and older):
    - who are residents of continuing care homes and supportive living accommodations;
    - with [eligible medical and immunocompromising conditions](#);
    - who are pregnant,
    - all First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals,
    - [health-care workers and other care providers](#) working in facilities; and
    - teachers.
  - Albertans 12+ who are not eligible for provincially funded vaccine **may purchase privately procured COVID-19 vaccine** through participating pharmacies.
- PPHS will use targeted pipeline allocations for influenza and COVID-19 vaccine to support inventory management and reduce wastage. A 20% wastage rate is the maximum acceptable

threshold for participating pharmacies; pharmacies exceeding this threshold during the 2026–27 season will be excluded from the following year's program.

- Replenishment ordering will open October 19, with maximum ordering limits. Pharmacies must also maintain required inventory reconciliation in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory (AVI) system.
- Updated Alberta Blue Cross PINs and RTI/ImmARI reason code guidance for influenza and COVID-19 immunization submissions.
- Effective October 1, 2026, provincially funded RSV vaccine eligibility expands to additional high-risk Albertans aged 18–69, including specified transplant, chronic oxygen therapy and dialysis populations.

Note: RxA is aware that some media have incorrectly reported non-eligible Albertans can be vaccinated at pharmacy for a \$100 fee. Only children age 6 mos to 11 years not meeting an eligibility criteria can be vaccinated at a cost of \$100 but only at a PCA clinic. Any non-eligible Albertans who are vaccinated in a pharmacy must use privately purchased vaccine at their cost.

In advance of the season be sure to review [Pharmacy Benefact 1338](#) for full program details.

## You're Invited: RxA's 2026 Annual General Meeting

RxA's Annual General Meeting will be held in person on Thursday, October 1, 2026, in Calgary! This members-only event is a chance to connect with colleagues, celebrate our accomplishments, and look ahead to what's next for our profession.

What's in store:

- Presidential Address: Hear from RxA President Aileen Jang, as she shares key updates and highlights from the past year.
- Food & Networking: Dinner will be provided, and the evening will offer a great opportunity to connect and network with fellow members.
- Keynote Presentation: Stay for valuable insights from the Alberta Pharmacists' Association's own Matt Tachuk, Director of Professional Practice, as he shares perspective on the New Multi-Year Pharmacy Funding Framework - an informative discussion you won't want to miss.

Event Details:

Date & Time: Thursday, October 1, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Sheraton Cavalier Calgary Hotel (2620 32nd Avenue NE, Calgary)

Join us for an evening of reflection, insight, and connection as we look back on the past year and explore the opportunities shaping pharmacy's future.

[Register here by September 25, 2026](#) to secure your spot. Please note: this event is exclusive to RxA members.

## Join RxA in Edmonton or Calgary for an Evening of Education

### Individualizing Vaccine Conversations to Improve Seasonal Respiratory Virus Protection

Join RxA for an in-person continuing education event focused on practical strategies to help pharmacists individualize vaccine conversations and support seasonal respiratory virus protection.

**Calgary – October 6, 2026**

6:00–9:00 PM

Saltlik Calgary

**Speaker: Anjli Acharya**

**Edmonton – October 13, 2026**

6:00–9:00 PM

Ruth's Chris Steak House Edmonton

**Speaker: Ashley Davidson**

Space is limited—[register early to secure your spot.](#)

*Learn more about RxA at [www.rxa.ca](http://www.rxa.ca).*

Thank you to Sanofi for sponsoring this educational event and supporting continuing education for Alberta pharmacists.

## Welcome, 1<sup>st</sup> Year U of A Pharmacy students, Class of 2030!

A new group of future pharmacists has officially arrived!

RxA was excited to join the University of Alberta's PharmD Class of 2030 for first-year orientation on August 30. With 145 students starting their pharmacy journey, it was the perfect chance to introduce them to RxA and welcome them to the profession. Students got a quick look at who we are, what we do, and how RxA will be in their corner throughout pharmacy school and into practice – through advocacy, professional development, connections and plenty of opportunities to get involved.

Our message to the newest pharmacy students? Ask questions. Get involved. Find your people. And enjoy the ride!

## Health Canada Information Sessions: New Controlled Substances Regulations

Health Canada's new **Controlled Substances Regulations** come into force on **October 1, 2026**, replacing several existing regulations governing controlled substances. To support the transition, Health Canada's Controlled Substances Program is offering information sessions focused on changes affecting **community pharmacy practice**, including pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy managers.

Multiple English sessions will be offered throughout October. Participants are asked to register for one session only.

[Learn more about the new Controlled Substances Regulations and upcoming information sessions.](#)

## GoPharmacist Learn Maintenance – Saturday, September 19th

On Saturday, September 19, 2026, GoPharmacist Learn will be undergoing system maintenance and updates from 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm. The portal will be unavailable during this time. Once the maintenance is complete, full access will be restored. We appreciate your patience as we make system improvements.

## Weekly Feature Sponsor – Lipikar Baume AP+MAX



## News

[Read the latest pharmacy news here.](#)