

Notification

Patients are notified by letter if the EDS application has been approved. The letter also indicates the time period for which the coverage has been granted. Coverage for many EDS drugs may be renewed. Patients should be aware of their coverage expiry date and should ask their physician or pharmacist to re-apply for coverage if it must be renewed.

If the EDS application is not approved, the patient will be notified by letter as to why coverage has not been approved. In some cases, Drug Plan staff require more information to determine the patient's eligibility for coverage. Eligibility will be reconsidered when further information is provided. If the EDS application is not approved, the entire cost of the prescription is the responsibility of the patient.

It is important to note that not every medication currently available on the market in Canada is a benefit under the Saskatchewan Drug Plan or under Exception Drug Status. If the Drug Plan receives a request to pay for a drug that is not a benefit under the Drug Plan, patients will be notified by letter. The entire cost of the prescription is the responsibility of the patient.



Saskatchewan
Health

If you have questions or concerns,
please contact:

Saskatchewan Health
Drug Plan &
Extended Benefits Branch
3475 Albert Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 6X6

In Regina:
787-3317

In Saskatchewan:
1-800-667-7581

www.health.gov.sk.ca

EXCEPTION DRUG STATUS

The Saskatchewan Formulary

The Saskatchewan Formulary is a list of drugs eligible for coverage under the Saskatchewan Drug Plan. It is updated on a quarterly basis. It is available on the internet at <http://formulary.drugplan.health.gov.sk.ca> or at many public libraries.

In order to be listed in the Saskatchewan Formulary, new prescription medications are reviewed by two expert committees. The committees assess the safety of the drug, how well it works, and the value of the drug to patients and to the health system. With the advice of the Drug Quality Assessment Committee and the Saskatchewan Formulary Committee, the Minister of Health compiles the Formulary list.

At the end of this process, some drugs are listed in the Formulary as a regular benefit. Others may be listed under Exception Drug Status (EDS). Some drugs are not recommended for coverage. If a drug is not in the Formulary, it may still be prescribed and sold in the province but it is not an eligible benefit under the Drug Plan.

More information on the drug review process can be found in the Saskatchewan Health pamphlet *Coverage of New Drugs*.

Exception Drug Status

Exception Drug Status (EDS) is criteria - based coverage for drug products where regular benefit listing may not be appropriate or possible. The list of EDS products and the EDS criteria for each drug is located in the Saskatchewan Formulary. The Formulary publication is available on the web site. For an EDS drug to be a benefit for an individual patient, an application for the specific EDS drug must be made to the Drug Plan and certain medical criteria must be met.

Drugs are designated as EDS for a variety of reasons:

- ✧ The drug is used infrequently since the alternatives listed in the Formulary are usually effective.
- ✧ The drug may be prescribed for use in other-than-approved conditions.
- ✧ There is potential for the development of widespread misuse of the drug.
- ✧ The drug is more expensive than the listed alternatives and offers an advantage in only a limited number of conditions.
- ✧ The drug is not usually prescribed in Saskatchewan.

For a complete list of circumstances where a drug may be listed as EDS, see the EDS section in the preface of the Saskatchewan Formulary.

Special authorization processes such as EDS are in place in all provincial and territorial drug plan programs.

EDS Application

Exception Drug Status coverage may only be requested by a prescriber or pharmacist on behalf of a patient. Requests can be submitted by telephone, by fax, or by mail. A toll-free phone line with electronic message system is available on a 24-hour basis exclusively for EDS requests.

Cost of EDS drugs

If the EDS drug is approved as a benefit, the patient would pay for the EDS drug in the same manner that they would for any other benefit drug, subject to the patient's drug coverage.

More information on prescription drug coverage can be found in the Saskatchewan Health pamphlets *It's for Your Benefit* or *Drug Plan Benefits*.