



**NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS PHARMACY POLICY CHANGE:
OPIOID DOSE ESCALATION LIMIT & UPDATE ON COMPENSATION FOR OPIOID
TREATMENT (METHADONE, SUBOXONE AND KADIAN)**

1. OPIOID DOSE ESCALATION LIMIT

Effective June 1, 2016, NIHB will no longer approve requests to increase opioid doses above 300 mg morphine equivalents per day. Clients who are currently approved on doses above 300 mg morphine equivalents per day (but below the NIHB maximum opioid dose limit for 450 mg morphine equivalents per day) will be permitted to continue at their current dose, but will not be approved for dose escalations. Requests sent to the Drug Exception Centre (DEC) to increase doses above 300 mg morphine equivalents per day will be considered only on a case-by-case basis for acute, temporary pain conditions. This policy does not apply to palliative clients or clients undergoing cancer treatment. This policy, as part of NIHB's Prescription Drug Abuse strategy, is intended to promote the safe and appropriate use of opioids.

2. UPDATE ON COMPENSATION FOR OPIOID TREATMENT (METHADONE, SUBOXONE AND KADIAN)

Effective June 1, 2016, the NIHB Program will modify compensation for opioid addiction treatment as follows:

Methadone

There will be a \$0.50 increase in the methadone reimbursement formula. The dispensing fee for methadone will be based upon the following formula (usual and customary dispensing fee*/7) + \$5.10 per dose. All other aspects related to claims submission requirements remain unchanged.

Suboxone & Kadian

Suboxone and Kadian will be removed from the NIHB Short-Term Dispensing Policy. The Program will reimburse providers their usual and customary dispensing fee* per dispense. A separate reimbursement for witnessing the ingestion of Suboxone or Kadian via pseudo DIN 91500002 will no longer be available.

Providers are encouraged to contact the NIHB claims processor, Express Scripts Canada (ESC) at 1-888-511-4666 for questions concerning fee structure changes to opioid addictions treatment.

** Up to the Program's regional maximum.*