



NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM: IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR PHARMACY PROVIDERS IN QUÉBEC

1. EMERGENCY SUPPLY PROCESS FOR MEDICATIONS REQUIRING PRIOR APPROVAL

The NIHB Program has a provision allowing providers to dispense medications requiring prior approval on an emergency basis (detailed in sections 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 of the agreement between the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program (NIHB Program) and the Association québécoise des pharmaciens propriétaires (AQPP)).

When a medication requiring prior approval is needed by an NIHB client on an emergency basis and the criteria for automated Prior Approval (PA) have not been met (i.e. a claim is submitted on-line and a prior approval is not electronically granted), a provider may dispense an initial course of treatment (maximum four-day supply).

Providers can refer to the following sections of their current agreement between the NIHB Program and the AQPP for information on dispensing medications requiring prior approval during regular business hours and on an emergency basis after hours.

5.2.1 For the NIHB and DND programs, if the pharmaceutical goods or service requires preauthorization as noted on the list of goods and services covered, the pharmacist shall contact the relevant exception centre. This centre shall decide if the pharmaceutical goods or service shall be covered or not.

5.2.2 For the NIHB program only, if, based on the professional judgment of the pharmacist, the treatment must be commenced without waiting for the definitive response from the exception centre, this centre may authorize payment to the pharmacist of a supply adequate for four days of treatment. In such a case, the delivery of four days of treatment shall be paid at the rate provided in paragraph 1B of section 6.2. The exception centre shall be able to renew this temporary authorization until its final decision.

5.2.3 For the NIHB program only, outside of open hours, if, based on the professional judgment of the pharmacist, the treatment must be commenced without waiting for the definitive response from the exception centre, the pharmacist may provide to the beneficiary a supply adequate for four days of treatment and, on the first day the exception centre is open, obtain the temporary authorization required by the centre. In such a case, the delivery of four days of treatment shall be paid at the rate provided in paragraph 1B of section 6.2.

Please note that the Drug Exception Centre (DEC) is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Providers requesting a prior approval can call 1-800-580-0950 during hours of operations.

2. PALLIATIVE CARE CLIENTS

NIHB clients who are diagnosed with a terminal illness and are near the end of life are eligible to receive supplemental benefits that are not included in the NIHB Drug Benefit List. These supplemental benefits are listed in the NIHB Palliative Care Formulary, included below.

If a claim is rejected for a palliative client, providers are advised to call DEC and request prior approval (or, if outside of DEC business hours, follow the emergency supply process described above). A Palliative Care Application Form will be generated and faxed to the prescriber. Once completed and submitted, the client will be eligible for all medications on the Palliative Care Formulary if the following criteria are met:

1. the client is not receiving care in a provincially funded hospital or long-term care facility; and
2. the client has been diagnosed with a terminal illness or disease which is expected to be the primary cause of death within six months or less.

Once approved, the client will be eligible for all medications on the Palliative Care Formulary for six months without the need for further prior approval. If coverage is required beyond the initial six months, an additional six months may be granted upon receipt of a new "Palliative Care Application Form" request.

NIHB PALLIATIVE CARE FORMULARY

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| · Atropine injection | · Metadol tablets & oral liquid |
| · Buscopan injection | · Methotrimeprazine injection |
| · Diazepam injection | · Methylnaltrexone injection |
| · Diazepam rectal gel | · Metoclopramide injection |
| · Fentanyl citrate injection | · Midazolam injection |
| · Fentanyl patches | · Moi-Stir Spray |
| · Furosemide injection | · Morphine injection |
| · Glycopyrrolate injection | · Nabilone capsules |
| · Granisetron injection | · Nutritional Supplements
(Ensure, Boost) |
| · Hydromorphone injection | · Ondansetron injection |
| · Hyoscine butylbromide injection | · Phenobarbital injection |
| · Ketamine injection | · Ranitidine injection |
| · Lorazepam injection | · Scopolamine injection &
patches |