



Behind the Scenes at the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP)

Issue #3 (Sept. 2003)

Implementation of a National Common Drug Review

As discussed in previous issues, recommendations for coverage of drug therapies is currently provided by the Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) of the Atlantic Common Drug Review (ACDR). This process was implemented in January 2002 to reduce duplication of effort and to provide consistent criteria amongst the Atlantic Provinces.

All publicly-funded federal/provincial/ territorial (F/P/T) drug plans, except Quebec, have participated in the development of a National Common Drug Review (CDR). Like the ACDR, the goals of the CDR are to reduce duplication of effort and to enhance the consistency of reviews. The CDR will be managed by the CDR Directorate, Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment (CCOHTA) in Ottawa. The membership of the Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee (CEDAC) will consist of a national independent body of physicians, pharmacists and other professionals with a mandate to use clinical and pharmacoeconomic reviews to make common recommendations to participating F/P/T drug plans. Each of the drug plans then will make their own listing decisions based on CEDAC recommendations as well as other factors including provincial priorities, plan mandate and resources.

The transition from the Atlantic Common Drug Review (ACDR) to the National Common Drug Review (CDR) is expected to take place in the Fall of 2003. The ACDR may be maintained as a scaled down version to deal with line extensions, new indications for old drugs, and class reviews, that are not currently part of the National mandate.

Coverage of Hydromorph Contin for Palliative Patients

It has come to the attention of this Department that palliative patients are having difficulty accessing prescriptions for Hydromorph Contin at the pharmacy level due to the special authorization requirement. It has been decided by this Department to take measures to remedy the situation. Pharmacies have been advised that they can

dispense Hydromorph Contin without prior approval if the prescription is written by a physician at the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Center and “**Palliative Patient**” is specified. Pharmacies have been requested to contact the Department of Health and Community Services on the next working day to have the special authorization activated. Similar arrangements could be considered for physicians practicing outside this center in the area of palliative care. Please address any request to be considered to Patricia Clark (Acting Supervisor).

Additions to the Benefit Listing

Regular/Full Benefit: Xalacom drops