



client NOTIFICATION

January 2016

Dispensing Fee Frequency Limits on Maintenance Medications

Applies to RWAM groups with drug card adjudication provided by either Green Shield Canada or Express Scripts Canada.

Effective February 1, 2016*, a limit of five prescription fills per year will be implemented for a defined list of maintenance drugs. If a pharmacist attempts to submit a drug claim for less than a three-month supply of a maintenance drug, the claim will be denied and the pharmacist will receive a message advising them that the days' supply submitted is below the minimum allowed.

Since maintenance drugs are used to control and manage a variety of chronic illnesses, including diabetes and hypertension, once a patient's condition is stabilized, these medications are most commonly prescribed for a three-month supply with multiple refills. A recent analysis of RWAM data has revealed a growing trend towards monthly dispensing of these maintenance medications. This practice can lead to patient inconvenience, reduced overall adherence to medication therapy, increased dispensing fees paid by plans and patients and overall increased drug plan costs.

The expectation is that most pharmacists will adjust their practices upon receiving the electronic message. Pharmacies are already accustomed to this type of policy associated with plans in the provincial and private sectors.

** Green Shield's changes will be effective Feb 1st and Express Scripts' will follow shortly thereafter.*

Please contact your Advisor if you have any questions.