

# BULLETIN

NO. 47

April 1, 2022

Dear Provider:

## **Enhancements to the Smoking Cessation Program**

The Smoking Cessation Program aims to improve access to quit smoking medications and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) by contributing to the cost of these products for individuals who are eligible under the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP).

Effective April 1, 2022, the Provincial Smoking Cessation Program (SCP) will implement the following enhancements:

- An individual can receive an additional 12 weeks of treatment under the special authorization process of a prescription drug (Champix® or Zyban®) or a NRT (patch, gum, lozenge or inhaler), extending treatment from 12 weeks to 24 weeks within a 365 day period.
- To provide additional support for control of cravings, an individual can access two smoking cessation therapies in combination under the special authorization process. Combination treatments include Zyban or varenicline plus NRT (patch or short acting), NRT patch plus short-acting NRT and Zyban plus varenicline.
- Nicotine Quick Mist will be added as a benefit under the special authorization process to be used in combination with Champix, Zyban or Nicotine patch, in patients who require additional control of cravings and have had an unsatisfactory response with another short acting NRT (gum, lozenge or inhaler).
- Client co-payments will be reduced from \$75.00 per 12 weeks of treatment to \$18.00 per 12 weeks of treatment.

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### Information for Pharmacists

#### What does the program cover?

The following drugs may be submitted for reimbursement under the Smoking Cessation Program.

- Zyban (DIN 02238441)
- Champix or its generic
  - Champix 0.5 mg Tablet (DIN 02291177)
  - Champix Starter Pack (DIN 02298309)
  - Champix Continuation Pack (DIN 02291185)
  - ACT Varenicline 0.5 mg (DIN 02426226)
  - ACT Varenicline 1 mg (DIN 02426234)
  - Apo-Varenicline Starter Pack (DIN 02435675)
  - Apo-Varenicline 1 mg (DIN 02419890)
  - Apo-Varenicline 0.5 mg (DIN 02419882)
  - Teva-Varenicline Starter Pack (DIN 94799999)
- Nicotine Gum
  - Nicorette Gum 2 mg (DIN 02091933)
  - Nicorette Gum 4 mg (DIN 02091941)
- Nicotine Inhaler
  - Nicotrol 10 mg Inhaler (DIN 02241742)
- Nicotine Lozenge
  - Nicorette 2 mg Lozenge (DIN 02247347)
  - Nicorette 4 mg Lozenge (DIN 02247348)
- Nicotine Patch
  - Nicoderm 7 mg/24hr Patch (DIN 80044518)
  - Nicoderm 14 mg/24hr Patch (DIN 80044503)
  - Nicoderm 21 mg/24hr Patch (DIN 80044515)
  - Habitrol 7 mg/24hr Patch (DIN 01943057)
  - Habitrol 14 mg/24hr Patch (DIN 01943065)
  - Habitrol 21 mg/24hr Patch (DIN 01943073)
- Nicorette Quickmist (DIN 80038858) – Special Authorization Required

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## Who can take part in the program?

### Beneficiary Eligibility

All beneficiaries aged 18 and over under the following NLPDP Drug Plans are eligible for coverage under the Smoking Cessation Program:

- Access
- 65+
- Foundation

## How can individuals access the medications and NRTs?

### Prescription Required

Eligible NLPDP clients must obtain a prescription from a physician, a nurse practitioner, or a pharmacist for the drugs and nicotine replacement products.

When filling their prescription, individuals must also present their NLPDP card to the pharmacy to indicate their eligibility for the program.

### How long is the treatment period?

All covered beneficiaries may receive one (1) treatment cycle (12 weeks) with a covered product without prior authorization, with the exception of Nicotine Quickmist, which requires prior approval that can be requested through the special authorization process using the [Standard Special Authorization Form](#).

For Zyban up to 3 claims (28 days each) will be allowed per treatment cycle.

For Champix a treatment cycle will be one Starter Pack and two Continuation Packs (28 days each)

For NRTs up to 6 claims (14 days each)

An additional treatment cycle (additional 12 weeks) can be requested through the special authorization process using the [Standard Special Authorization Form](#).

### What is combination therapy?

If a prescriber determines an individual would benefit from a short acting NRT to address cravings or an individual requires two treatment products, a second product can be requested through the special authorization process using the [Standard Special Authorization Form](#).

### What is the process for submitting a pharmacy claim?

While the Provincial Smoking Cessation Program is not formally part of the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP), claims for the covered Smoking Cessation products may be submitted for claim adjudication and payment through the NLPDP Real-Time Claim Adjudication System.

Claims for drugs under the Smoking Cessation Program are to be submitted in the same manner as any other claims under the NLPDP, specifically:

- The drug price paid will be paid based on the standard NLPDP pricing, with a 8.5% markup (9% markup for generics) included;
- The dispense fee paid will be paid as per current agreement with PANL; and
- No additional Special Service Fee's will be paid.

A beneficiary can receive three (3) dispenses (28 day supply each) of Zyban for first treatment cycle without a special authorization.

A beneficiary can receive one (1) Starter Pack and two (2) continuation packs (28 day supply each) of Champix for first treatment cycle without a special authorization.

NRTs - The following quantity limits per Dispense will apply for one (1) treatment cycle (12 weeks):

**Nicorette Gum**

Fill 1 – 315

Fill 2 – 210

Fill 3 – 210

Fill 4 – 210

Fill 5 – 105

Fill 6 – 105

Total: 1,155 pieces of gum

**Nicorette Lozenge**

Fill 1 – 176

Fill 2 – 176

Fill 3 – 176

Fill 4 – 176

Fill 5 – 176

Fill 6 – 176

Total: 1,056 lozenges

**Nicoderm Patch**

Fill 1 – 14

Fill 2 – 14

Fill 3 – 14

Fill 4 – 14

Fill 5 – 14

Fill 6 – 14

Total: 84 patches

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**Nicorette Inhaler**

Fill 1 – 168 cartridges (4 inhalers)

Fill 2 – 126 cartridges (3 inhalers)

Fill 3 – 84 cartridges (2 inhalers)

Fill 4 – 84 cartridges (2 inhalers)

Fill 5 – 42 cartridges (1 inhaler)

Fill 6 – 42 cartridges (1 inhaler)

Total: 13 inhalers

**Nicorette Quickmist**

Nicorette Quickmist (DIN 80038858) will require prior approval regardless of treatment cycle.

**The following circumstances will be considered under special authorization:**

Higher daily doses of nicotine patch:

- Beneficiaries who require more than one patch per day based on number of cigarettes smoked, may access the additional patches required under special authorization.

Additional treatment within a year:

- Beneficiaries who have received 12 weeks of an open benefit treatment but require an additional 12 weeks of treatment within a year (365 days), can access this additional treatment under special authorization.

Combination therapy of two smoking cessation products as follows:

- Bupropion plus NRT (patch or short acting)
- Varenicline plus NRT (patch or short acting)
- NRT patch plus short-acting NRT
- Bupropion plus varenicline

Combination therapy with Nicorette QuickMist:

- QuickMist may be considered in combination with varenicline, bupropion or NRT patches for beneficiaries who require additional support to help control cravings AND have not had an adequate response with a reasonable trial of one other short acting NRT (gum, lozenge, or inhaler).
- Nicorette QuickMist will be limited to a maximum of 23 devices over a treatment cycle (sufficient quantity to last 12 weeks at recommended doses).

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Treatment switches due to failure or intolerance:

- If within the first 2-4 weeks of treatment, a beneficiary experiences intolerable side effects, a switch will be permitted to a different smoking cessation agent. Details regarding the nature of the intolerance must be noted on the special authorization form.
- Beneficiaries who continue to experience withdrawal symptoms despite the use of an optimal dose of a first-line treatment and who are not already taking a short-acting NRT, should consider adding a short-acting NRT to help control cravings. If there has been **no** response to the initial agent after 2-4 weeks and the beneficiary continues to smoke, a switch to a different first-line treatment will be considered.

Special authorization requests can be submitted using the [Standard Special Authorization Form](#).

### **Adjudication Codes and Messaging**

If a claim for a Smoking Cessation Product is submitted and the beneficiary has had a paid claim for a different Smoking Cessation Product in the last 365 days the claim will reject with message CP – (Eligible for Special Authorization) and the message. “Additional Smoking Cessation Therapy available under Special Authorization”

Once the beneficiary has used their three (3) dispenses for Zyban / Champix or six (6) dispenses for a NRT for the treatment cycle, any subsequent claims in that year will reject with message CP (Eligible for Special Authorization) and the message “Additional Smoking Cessation Therapy available under Special Authorization”

Paid claims for Zyban will return the message “x dispenses remaining” indicating how many dispenses of Zyban the beneficiary has remaining for the treatment cycle.

Only one Champix Starter Pack can be claimed in a treatment cycle. Any subsequent claims for a Starter Pack in the period will reject with message CN (Patient Has Attained Quantity Limit) and the message “Starter Pack already dispensed for this cycle”

Paid claims for the Champix Starter Packs will return the message “x dispenses remaining” indicating how many dispenses of the Champix Continuation Packs the beneficiary has remaining for the treatment cycle.

Each dispense of NRTs must be for 14 days, with a submitted quantity outlined above. Up to 6 dispenses (84 days) will be allowed in one treatment cycle without prior authorization.

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With each paid dispense of NRT the system will display the message ‘X dispenses remaining’ where X is the number of NRT dispenses remaining in the treatment cycle.

In cases where more than 21 mg of Nicotine Patch per day is needed upon initiation of NRT therapy, healthcare providers can apply under Special Authorization process detailing the required dose, duration and clinical rationale.

If a claim for Zyban, Champix, or NRT is submitted and the beneficiary has had paid claims for the maximum allowed in a year (24 weeks of treatment) the claim will reject with CP (Eligible for Special Authorization) and the message “Additional Smoking Cessation Therapy available under Special Authorization”

If a claim for Quickmist is submitted and the beneficiary does not have a special authorization the claim will reject with message CP (Eligible for Special Authorization).

If a claim for Zyban, Champix or NRT (excluding Quickmist) is submitted and is for a quantity greater than the allowed quantity limit as noted above, the claim will reject with 58 (Quantity Error) and message “Quantity should be less than or equal to SC Max Quantity”.

If a claim for Zyban, Champix or NRT (excluding Quickmist) is submitted and has a days supply greater than the allowed days supply, the claim will reject with 59 (Days Supply Error) and message “Days supply should be equal to SC Days Supply Limit”.

If a claim for a Smoking Cessation Product is submitted where the quantity is greater than the quantity remaining on the Special Authorization, the claim will reject with CN (Client has Attained Quantity Limit) and Quantity remaining.

#### **Is there a co-payment for clients?**

As the Smoking Cessation Program is not formally part of the NLPDP, the normal NLPDP client co-payments WILL NOT APPLY. Instead, a new co-payment will be applied to each claim as follows (regardless of the specific NLPDP Plan the beneficiary is covered under):

- Champix and Zyban are to be dispensed once every 28 days for a total of 84 days (3 dispenses) with a patient co-pay of \$6.00 per dispense (total co-pay of \$18.00 per treatment cycle).
- NRT’s are to be dispensed every 14 days for a total of 84 days (6 dispenses) with a patient co-pay of \$3.00 per dispense (total co-pay of \$18.00 per treatment cycle).

#### **Is Coordination of Benefits required?**

Coordination of Benefits WILL NOT be required for claims under the Smoking Cessation Program. If required, the intervention code DB may be used to override Coordination of Benefits on a specific claim.

### **Benefit of Combining Counseling with Smoking Cessation Therapies**

Research indicates that an individual can increase their chances of quitting smoking successfully by using a combination of smoking cessation therapies and counseling. Filling a prescription for Champix, Zyban or NRTs provides the opportunity to support patients with their efforts to quit smoking and to connect patients with services available in the province **such as the NL Smokers' Helpline.**

### **NL Smokers' Helpline Referral Program**

The NL Lung Association Smokers' Helpline (SHL) provides individuals with free one-on-one confidential support to help with quitting smoking. Individuals can connect with trained counselors via phone, email, text and online.

Through the Helpline's Referral Program (Ask, Advise, Refer), health professionals including pharmacists are able to refer patients to counseling services via fax or online referral. The referral process is quick and has three easy steps:

1. Ask your patients if they use tobacco products or have recently quit.
2. Advise them about the benefits of quitting.
3. Refer them to the Smokers' Helpline. Ask if they would like to be referred to the NL Smokers' Helpline for support with quitting or staying tobacco free by completing and submitting the Fax Referral Form (fax to 709-726-2550) or Online Form (through [www.smokershelp.net](http://www.smokershelp.net)). A trained counselor will then call the patient to provide free specialized support and counseling.

For a copy of the CARE package, which includes the referral form, please contact the NL Smokers' Helpline at 1-800-363-5864 (LUNG) or [www.smokershelp.net](http://www.smokershelp.net).

### **How can individuals obtain information about the program?**

For information, individuals can contact the Smoker's Helpline at 1-800-363-5864 or visit:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/healthyliving/tobaccocontrol/>.

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