



BRITISH COLUMBIA
CENTRE *for* EXCELLENCE
in HIV/AIDS

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July 5, 2018

Dear Healthcare Provider:

RE: Generic Antiretroviral Products Available on BC-CfE Formulary

A number of generic antiretroviral (ARV) medications are now available on BC-CfE Formulary. A generic product has an alternate manufacturer than the originator brand, but contains identical medicinal ingredients and strength, and has similar non-medicinal ingredients. In alignment with BC Pharmacare Policy, the BC-CfE Drug Treatment Program will provide the lowest cost alternative product available to program participants to promote program sustainability.

In Canada, quality standards for brand name and generic drugs are identical. Ingredients, manufacturing processes and facilities for all drugs must meet Health Canada guidelines for Good Manufacturing Practices. Generic drug products must also meet predefined characteristics as their brand name counterparts in “comparative bioavailability studies”.

The following generic ARV products are currently included in the BC-CfE Formulary:

**Single ingredient
Tablets or Capsules**

Abacavir
Atazanavir
Efavirenz
Lamivudine
Nevirapine
Tenofovir DF
Zidovudine

**Combination Tablets
(Originator Brand Name)**

Abacavir-lamivudine (Kivexa[®])
Abacavir-lamivudine-zidovudine (Trizivir[®])
Lamivudine-zidovudine (Combivir[®])
Emtricitabine-tenofovir DF (Truvada[®])
Efavirenz-emtricitabine-tenofovir DF (Atripla[®])

The introduction of generic ARV products is closely monitored, including potential emerging safety issues. To date, there have been isolated reports of intolerance following the transition to generic ARVs.

- In the event of a suspected allergic reaction or intolerance to a generic product listed on BC-CfE formulary, consistent with BC Pharmacare Policy, clinicians may request access to an alternate generic product, where available.

- To request an alternative generic, complete and submit an HIV Drug Treatment Program Prescription Request Form (available at www.cfenet.ubc.ca), specifying details of the drug reaction.
- If the client does not tolerate the available generic alternative(s), coverage of the brand name product will be considered with submission of the BC-CfE Prescription Request Form, with details of intolerance/allergy.
- Alternatively, a BC-CfE clinician can be consulted regarding an alternative ARV regimen.

Please note that BC Pharmacare Policy on this issue specifically states:

- When the same drug is made and sold by more than one manufacturer, Pharmacare covers the less costly version- the low cost alternative. Pharmacare covers only those drugs that meet a set price. The Low Cost Alternative Program ensures British Columbians get the best value for multiple-source drugs. If your patient is allergic, or has intolerance, to the non-therapeutic ingredients used in the low-cost alternative drugs, a written request can be submitted for full coverage of another drug (including an alternate generic brand of the same drug).

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact the BC-CfE Drug Treatment Program.

Sincerely,



Val Montessori, MD, FRCPC
Co-Chair, Committee for Drug Evaluation and Therapy



Julio S.G. Montaner, MD, DSc (Hon), FRCPC, FCCP, FACP, FRSC
Director

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