

Focus Update



November 29, 2018

Biosimilar coverage for plan members

Biosimilars present a valuable treatment option to plan members for a wide range of medical conditions and are currently available at between 17 to 47 percent less than the price of their reference biologic. Sun Life is supportive of a biosimilars market in Canada and employs a flexible approach to these drugs, reviewing them on a case-by-case basis. This is aligned with our philosophy of offering our Clients choices and access to the broadest array of options in managing their health while ensuring drug plans are sustainable for future generations.

Biosimilars - large, complex molecules highly similar but not interchangeable (like traditional generic alternatives) to their reference biologic drugs.

Biosimilars coverage available to plan members in all cases

For new patients (not already stabilized on therapy with a reference biologic), we already list some biosimilars preferentially to their reference biologics. In 2019 we will have the capability to limit reimbursement of a reference biologic to that of its biosimilar. This will allow plan member choice, while ensuring biosimilar coverage is eligible for reimbursement, regardless of the claim submitted.

More options supporting plan member choice

Living with a chronic disease can be challenging and we appreciate that for some patients, switching to a biosimilar drug can be more than an inconvenience. That's why we support plan member choice when it comes to switching from a reference biologic to a biosimilar. For Remicade®, plan members can switch to the biosimilar if they chose to, but should they chose to remain on the reference biologic, the cost will be the same as for the biosimilar.

Update to Remicade® savings program

For all patients, infliximab biosimilars continue to be an option with equal criteria to the reference biologic (Remicade®) in all provinces.

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Effective **October 3, 2018**, the cost of Remicade® is now the same as its biosimilar option(s). For purchases in Quebec, plan sponsors will continue to see the savings as credit to their plan after the transaction.

For other provinces, the saving occurs at the pharmacy when the PDD card is used, so there are no additional out of pocket amounts for plan members.

Under this revised agreement, plan members residing in Pharmacare provinces (BC, Manitoba and Saskatchewan) continue to have choice in infliximab therapy, while plan sponsors enjoy savings. For existing and new patients in those provinces, the treatment cost of Remicade® is also the same as its biosimilar option(s).

Questions?

Contact your Sun Life Financial group benefits representative.