

NOTICE FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

May 16, 2008

I have received a number of comments regarding the proposed amendments to the regulations under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act* (ODBA) and the *Drug Interchangeability and Dispensing Fee Act* (DIDFA).

I am writing to provide you with clarification regarding section 5 of the proposed regulation made under the ODBA which pertains to dispensing fees (the "Proposed Dispensing Fee Regulation"). This section provides that the ministry is not required to pay a dispensing fee for the dispensing of a drug to an eligible person in a quantity that is sufficient for less than 30-day course of treatment. It is proposed that exceptions be made in respect of eligible persons who are residents of long-term care homes and in cases where the prescriber has indicated on the prescription that a lower quantity is to be dispensed. In other words, if a physician or other prescriber has directed that an ongoing prescription be dispensed more frequently than once monthly, the ministry will pay the dispensing fee prescribed in the regulations.

Contrary to the information that has been posted on the "Dispensing with Care" website, the Proposed Dispensing Fee Regulation does not prohibit compliance packaging or "blister packs", nor does it interfere with the right of patients to choose the treatment that will best meet their needs.

I am aware of the issues relating to patient compliance with dosage instructions. I also appreciate that prescribers and pharmacists must be able to make clinical decisions that address their patients' individual health care needs.

In accordance with the principles set out in the ODBA, the public drug system aims to meet the needs of Ontarians as patients, consumers and taxpayers. In my capacity as Executive Officer and as a steward of public funds, I also have a responsibility to consistently achieve value-for-money and to ensure the best use of resources at every level of the system.

I would like to thank all those who have submitted their comments. Please be advised that interested parties are invited to provide written comments on the proposed regulations to amend Regulation 935 made under the DIDFA and Ontario Regulation 201/96 made under the ODBA **before 5 p.m. on Friday, May 30, 2008**.

The Notice of Proposed Regulation to Amend Ontario Regulation 935 under the DIDFA and Ontario Regulation 201/96 under the ODBA can be accessed at:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/legislation/drugs/hu_drugsact.html

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