

## 1. When will the paper drug eligibility card be phased out?

Starting December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, social assistance clients who have a valid Ontario health card will no longer receive a paper drug eligibility card.

This change will apply to all clients of the:

- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)\*, which includes Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)
- Ontario Works Program (OW)\*, which includes Temporary Care Assistance (TCA)

\* This includes First Nation clients who receive benefits from ODSP and M'Chigeeng First Nation.

**Note:** At this time, there is no change for clients served by First Nations Ontario Works Administrators who do not use the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS). They will continue to receive monthly paper drug eligibility cards until further notice.

## 2. Will all social assistance clients have to use their Ontario health card to access prescription medication?

No. Some client will continue to receive a paper drug card, including:

- Clients who are not eligible for an Ontario health card, and
- Clients served by First Nations Ontario Works Administrators who do not SAMS.

## 3. If a patient has a valid paper drug card on the date of service and the pharmacist receives an error response when processing the patient's drug claim, does the pharmacist need to contact the Social Assistance Verification (SAV) Helpline to verify the client's social assistance eligibility for drug coverage?

No. If the client presents a paper drug card, the pharmacists does not have to call the SAV Helpline. Pharmacists should follow existing procedures for processing drug claims with a paper drug card as outlined in the Ontario Drug Programs Reference Manual provided to you by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC).

## 4. Can pharmacists accept expired health cards?

No. Elimination of the paper drug card will not impact policies around eligibility for the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program. To qualify under the ODB program, which includes the drug coverage under Ontario Works and ODSP, a person must live in Ontario and have a valid Ontario health card.

## 5. If a client loses their Ontario health card, how quickly can a paper drug card be issued?

If necessary, during office hours, ODSP/OW staff can issue a manual paper drug card immediately and it can be faxed to the pharmacy, per the current process.

## 6. How will the paperless drug card implementation impact Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) coverage?

Elimination of the paper drug card will not impact clients' benefit coverage under social assistance. It is merely phasing out the use of the paper drug card to enable clients to access drug coverage with their Ontario health card.



## Paperless Drug Card Q&As for Pharmacists

7. **Previously, all benefit unit members were on the same paper drug card. If one benefit unit member needed to pick up prescriptions for another benefit unit member, it was not a problem because they were all on the same card. Now, if each benefit unit member uses his/her own health card, will benefit unit members need the health cards of the others to pick up their prescriptions?**

Allowing someone to pick-up another person's prescription and the necessary identification required would be at the pharmacy's discretion.

8. **For newborn babies, will pharmacies accept the Temporary (paper) Ontario health card number provided to the parent while in hospital until such time as the green card is received in the mail?**

There is no change to documents that pharmacies would normally accept when dispensing prescription medication. This includes accepting the tear-off record (from the infant registration form) of a newborn's Ontario health number.

9. **In the example of a family of three, where two family members have Ontario health cards and one does not, the person that does not have an Ontario health card will continue to receive a paper drug card. How will the other family members know that they still have drug coverage and they need to use their Ontario health card?**

Effective December 1, 2016, only those benefit unit members that have a temporary health reference number will be included on the paper drug card. Communications have been sent to social assistance staff, clients, pharmacists and other stakeholders advising that clients with a permanent health number will need to use their Ontario health card and clients who are not eligible for a health card will continue to receive paper drug cards until they can obtain a health card.

10. **When processing a drug claim, are pharmacists still required to identify whether a social assistance client is on Plan C or D in order to be able to bill?**

There has been **no change** to the way pharmacists process claims in the HNS. Therefore, regardless of whether a client presents an Ontario Health Card or a paper drug, it is necessary to identify the plan code. If the client does not know the plan code, the client may be able to tell you the social assistance program he/she is on. The plan codes are as follows:

- **Plan C** is for ODSP and ACSD,
- **Plan D** is for OW and TCA.

If a pharmacist is unable to determine the plan code for a client, the SAV Helpline is available to help pharmacists confirm client eligibility and/or the plan code.

11. **Are plan codes, other than C or D, used for social assistance clients?**

Historically, there were plan codes specific to individual Ontario Works offices, however, the system has since been centralized and all Ontario Works clients are under Plan D.

In some cases, Ontario Works offices continue to issue paper drug cards with other plan codes, such as M, N or Y. Work is underway to phase out the use of plan codes other than C or D.

In the meantime, pharmacists are advised to accept plan codes C, D, M, N, or Y. If an error response code is received, when entering the alternative plan codes, pharmacists should enter Plan D for Ontario Works. If pharmacists continue to receive an error response code, they should call the SAV Helpline to confirm the client's social assistance eligibility for the period in question.

**\* To prevent an error response code, remember to enter the eligibility end date (e.g. the end of the current month).**

Below is the full list of plan codes used in HNS.

# Paperless Drug Card Q&As for Pharmacists

ELIGIBILITY ESTABLISHMENT SUMMARY CHART			
Carrier ID (Plan Code)	Program	Eligibility Establishment Availability Periods (Level 1: Standard Override)	Eligibility Establishment Availability Periods (Level 2: Emergency Override)
A	Higher Income Seniors	Not available	Not available
X	Oral Hypoglycemics	Not available	Not available
E	Long-Term Care	To end of current month	Date of service only
P	Home Care	30 days	Date of service only
C	MCSS – Ontario Disability Support Program	To end of current month*	Date of service only
D	MCSS – Ontario Works Program	To end of current month*	Date of service only
K	MCSS – Ontario Works Program	To end of current month*	Date of service only
L	MCSS – Ontario Works Program – Peel Office	To end of current month*	Date of service only
M	MCSS – Ontario Works Program - Toronto	To end of current month*	Date of service only
N	MCSS – Ontario Works Program - Hamilton	To end of current month*	Date of service only
Y	MCSS – Manual Offices	To end of current month*	Date of service only
H	Homes of Special Care	Current month + month **	Not available
T	Trillium Drug Program	Not available	Not available
R	Lower Income Seniors	Not available	Not available

## 12. In what circumstances should pharmacists call the SAV Helpline or the ODB Pharmacy Help Desk?

Call the SAV Helpline	Call the ODB Pharmacy Help Desk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a patient in receipt of social assistance               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ does not have a paper drug card,</li> <li>○ presents an Ontario health card and</li> <li>○ a HNS error response code related to the patient’s social assistance eligibility is received when processing the patient’s drug claim (please see social assistance error response codes in chart below). *</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When a patient in receipt of social assistance               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ presents you with an Ontario health card but</li> <li>○ does not know his/her program plan code and</li> <li>○ does not know if he/she is on ODSP or OW and</li> <li>○ you need to find out the patient’s program plan code in order to process the patient’s drug claim</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you receive a drug related HNS error code after attempting to process a patient’s drug claim <u>after</u> proof of enrolment has been confirmed by the SAV Helpline or a monthly drug card is physically presented in the pharmacy</li> <li>• When you have established the patient’s social assistance eligibility for the period in question and confirmed the patient’s plan code (C or D) but the HNS is not accepting the override</li> <li>• When you have questions about how to process a patient’s claim in HNS</li> <li>• When you are experiencing technical difficulties with the HNS system</li> </ul>

# Paperless Drug Card Q&As for Pharmacists

- \* The Health Network System will reject claims for recipients deemed ineligible at the time of dispensing with one of the following response codes:

32	Client ID # error ( <i>i.e.</i> , Health Number incorrectly entered in the Client ID# field or incorrect in the HNS database)
C2	Service provided before effective date
C3	Coverage expired before service
C8	No record of this beneficiary ( <i>i.e.</i> , Ministry not advised of eligibility of recipient)
CJ	Patient not covered by this plan ( <i>i.e.</i> , may be covered under another plan)

### 13. What claim code should be used if a person's social assistance eligibility is verified through the SAV Helpline?

For claims where eligibility is established by contacting the SAV Helpline, pharmacies should use override code ML – eligibility established.

### 14. What are the hours of operation of the SAV Helpline?

The SAV Helpline was established, effective September 1, 2016, to respond to calls from pharmacies who seek to confirm social assistance clients' eligibility. The SAV Helpline is currently available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Starting December 1, 2016, the SAV Helpline hours will be extended from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday.

### 15. In the event that a pharmacist needs to contact the SAV Helpline outside of the hours of operation and they have determined that the patient requires a drug immediately, can the pharmacist dispense the drug using the good faith intervention code?

Elimination of the paper drug card will not impact the current Ontario College of Pharmacist standards of practice nor the current process for use of the Good Faith override code for situations where a pharmacist determines that a patient requires a drug immediately and cannot verify plan eligibility.

If the Good Faith intervention code is used, and coverage is established, the drug card or documentation of coverage being established from the SAV Helpline must be readily available for inspection purposes (see #16 below for documentation requirements).

### 16. What information are pharmacists required to document after a patient's eligibility is confirmed through the SAV Helpline?

Upon obtaining information related to the eligibility of a client, pharmacists are advised to record a note in their vendor software and on the prescription hardcopy detailing the following information:

- The first and last name of the person who made the call to SAV Helpline
- The date and time of the call
- Patient first name and last name
- Patient's ODB number (from health card or prescription)
- Type of Coverage Confirmed (Plan Code)
- Dates of Coverage Confirmed
- Confirmation number from the SAV Helpline to confirm client's eligibility for ODB and a note that the SAV Helpline was contacted to confirm the person's social assistance eligibility

The information should be logged on the prescription hard copy and in the client's electronic file and retained on file for the next two years following the last claim date.

Please be advised that all elements of documentation listed above are required for post-payment verification purposes. Claims that are submitted with the ML override code without the documented information at the time of claim submission may be subject to recovery.

- 17. If a patient's eligibility has been confirmed and later in the same month the patient requires another prescription that generates an error relating to eligibility, must the pharmacist call the SAV Helpline again?**

Pharmacists are advised to confirm a patient's social assistance eligibility each time they receive an error response code when processing a drug claim.