

# **Executive Officer Notice: Updated Income Eligibility Thresholds for the Seniors Co-Payment Program under the Ontario Drug Benefit Program**

May 11, 2021

The income eligibility thresholds for the Seniors Co-payment Program (SCP), under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program, are being updated from \$19,300 to \$22,200 (for single seniors) and \$32,300 to \$37,100 (for senior couples) starting on August 1, 2021.

As part of its comprehensive plan to end hallway health care, Ontario is investing in programs that keep seniors healthy in their communities longer. Our government will continue to support Ontario's seniors with access to quality health care they deserve.

These updates ensure that the SCP income eligibility thresholds better reflect cost-of-living increases in Ontario and continue to be in line with increases to income supports for seniors. With the updated thresholds more seniors in Ontario will have access to lower deductibles and co-payments for medications covered under the ODB Program.

On the first day of the month after they turn 65 years of age, all OHIP-insured Ontarians are automatically enrolled in the Ontario Drug Benefit program, which covers most of the costs of more than 5,000 prescription drug products. Seniors pay the first \$100 of their prescription drug costs each year (annual deductible) before they are eligible for drug coverage. After the deductible is paid, seniors then pay up to \$6.11 toward the dispensing fee for every prescription (a co-payment). The Seniors Co-payment Program (SCP) under the ODB is an application-based program for seniors with incomes less than certain income eligibility thresholds. Seniors enrolled in the SCP pay no annual deductible and a reduced co-payment of \$2 per each prescription, improving access to essential drugs.

Eligible seniors are encouraged to apply now to the SCP in advance of the start of the upcoming Benefit Year (August 1, 2021). This will ensure that those who qualify for the SCP will receive the reduction in their drug deductible and co-payments beginning August 1, 2021, and minimize the chance of out of pocket expenses.

Ontarians who are currently 65 years of age or older or turning 65 on or after August 1, 2021 and who meet the new income eligibility thresholds for SCP, may apply now to the

SCP for the reduction in their deductible and co-payment starting August 1, 2021. They can complete an application form available [online](#) or request an application over the phone by calling toll free 1-888-405-0405 or 416-503-4586 in the Toronto area.

To further inform healthcare providers and patients, we have also included a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document that can be found under the 2021 section at the following link:

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/drugs/opdp\\_eo/eo\\_communiq.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/drugs/opdp_eo/eo_communiq.aspx)

Ontario Regulation 201/96 under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act* has been amended with the new thresholds. For the authoritative text of the regulation, please visit the e-Laws website at: <http://www.ontario.ca/laws>

**Additional information:**

**For pharmacies:**

If you have any questions, please contact the ministry by email at [PublicDrugPrgrms.moh@ontario.ca](mailto:PublicDrugPrgrms.moh@ontario.ca) or the ODB Help Desk at 1-800-668-6641.

**For all other health care providers and the public:**

Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282.