Pharmacy FAQs #2 on Paxlovid™

(August 30, 2022)

1. **Who is eligible for Paxlovid™ therapy?**

   Symptomatic adult patients (18 years and older) with mild disease who are at high risk of disease progression and are within Day 5 of symptom onset are eligible to receive Paxlovid™ if they are:

   - Unvaccinated/Under-vaccinated: (defined as a single dose or less of an approved two dose vaccine)
     - Age 55 or older
     - Age ≥ 18 to < 55 with at least 1 or more risk factors below
   - Regardless of vaccination status:
     - Immunocompromised (due to underlying medical condition or medication)
     - Age 70 or older + 3 or more risk factors below
     - Age 70 or older, Indigenous (regardless of SK geographic location) + 2 or more risk factors below
     - Age 70 or older, residing in the north (NE1/2, NW1, AHA) + 2 or more risk factors below

   Risk factors include:

   - Diabetes
   - BMI 30 kg/m^2 or greater
   - Sickle Cell Disease
   - Chronic kidney disease with a decreased eGFR (must be ≥ 30 mL/min/1.73m^2 to < 60 mL/min/1.73 m^2)
   - Cardiovascular or Cerebrovascular Disease (Hypertension, Coronary Artery Disease, Congestive Heart Failure, Congenital Heart Disease, Cardiomyopathy, Stroke, Atrial fibrillation, Hyperlipidemia)
   - Neurodevelopmental disorders (i.e., cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome) or other conditions that confer medical complexity (i.e., genetic or metabolic syndromes and severe congenital anomalies)
   - Chronic Lung Disease (COPD, Moderate-Severe Asthma, Cystic Fibrosis, Pulmonary Fibrosis, Pulmonary Hypertension)

2. **Who is eligible for an additional treatment course of Paxlovid™?**

   - The Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch (DPEBB) will now pay pharmacies for prescribing and/or dispensing an additional treatment course of Paxlovid™ for eligible individuals with a new and distinct COVID-19 infection in the following conditions:
     - Previous COVID-19 infection
       - 90 days or more have elapsed since symptoms from previous infection have resolved
     - Previous treatment with an early COVID-19 therapeutic (i.e.: Paxlovid™, remdesivir or sotrovimab):
       - Eligible for second course of an early COVID-19 antiviral (ie: Paxlovid™ or remdesivir) provided at least 90 days have elapsed since symptoms from previous infection have resolved.

3. **How many Paxlovid™ courses are individuals eligible to receive?**

   - Individuals meeting eligibility criteria are authorized to receive TWO (2) courses of anti-viral treatment, including both Paxlovid™ and remdesivir.

4. **How can I tell if this is a new and distinct COVID-19 infection if the individual has had COVID-19 before?**
   - Rapid Antigen (RAT) and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests may not be an accurate indication of a new and distinct infection if the patient previously had COVID-19. New and distinct infection means COVID-19 symptoms have resolved from the previous infection; it must be confirmed that 90 days have elapsed since symptom resolution for the individual to be eligible for an additional course. Prescribers must use clinical judgement to confirm that the presenting COVID-19 infection is new and distinct compared to a previously confirmed COVID-19 infection.

5. **How do I know if my patient was treated with remdesivir or sotrovimab for a prior COVID-19 infection?**
   - Since remdesivir and sotrovimab are administered by infusion at a Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) site, it will not be visible in PIP (Pharmaceutical Information Program). Prescribers must review the eHR Viewer discharge notes, and/or confirm with the patient whether or not they received remdesivir or sotrovimab at least 90 days ago, to be eligible for Paxlovid™ or remdesivir for treatment of a new COVID-19 infection.

6. **Who can help me if I need clinical support assessing or prescribing a Paxlovid™ prescription?**
   - There are various resources available to assist in assessing or prescribing Paxlovid™. medSask has many resources available on their website at https://medsask.usask.ca/ but will also be able to assist you over the phone (1-800-667-3425 or 306-966-6340 Saskatoon) or via e-mail (druginfo@usask.ca).
   - Complex cases may be referred to the SHA Specialized Early COVID Therapeutics Team for assessment. (See FAQ 7).

7. **How do I refer patients to the SHA Specialized Early COVID Therapeutics Team for complex Paxlovid™ review or remdesivir therapy? What documents do I need to send them?**
   - Please e-mail the completed *Prescriber Assessment Mild COVID-19 (Paxlovid™)* to c19meds@saskhealthauthority.ca.
   - **Prior to sending, please ensure the PAR is completed to the best of your ability** to avoid potential delays in therapy and inappropriate referrals. Please send them the full *Prescriber Assessment Mild Covid-19 (Paxlovid™)* (PAR).

8. **Can I prescribe or provide Paxlovid™ to patients from out-of-province/out-of- country?**
   - Yes, pharmacists can prescribe and fill a Paxlovid™ prescription for a patient who is from out-of-province/out-of-country.
   - Similarly, the pharmacy is eligible for the Ineligibility/Referral Assessment fees when declining to prescribe or provide Paxlovid™ to out-of-province/out-of-province patients if it is deemed that upon review, they are no longer eligible for Paxlovid™ therapy.
   - If prescribing or providing Paxlovid™ to a patient without a Saskatchewan Health Services Number, email the DPEBB to track utilization and to arrange for an alternate fee billing process. Please ensure that you capture the patient's home address, phone number and date of birth for out-of-province/out-of-province patients.

9. **What if I receive a Paxlovid™ prescription issued on something other than the approved medSask *Prescriber Assessment Mild COVID-19 (Paxlovid)* form?**
   - Paxlovid™ prescriptions can **ONLY** be filled if they are written on the approved medSask *Prescriber Assessment Mild COVID-19 (Paxlovid)* form.

10. If I want to start or stop prescribing or dispensing Paxlovid™, what do I need to do?

- If you are interested in participating or are no longer able to participate in the program, please notify the DPEBB. A list of participating pharmacies is posted on the government website for public access. Any changes in status need to come to the DPEBB as soon as possible so this list can be updated accordingly.

For additional information, please refer to the Bulletin #802, the May 19, 2022 FAQs- Paxlovid, *Paxlovid Distribution Prescribing and Assessment Phase 2- Process and Billing Instructions* document on the Formulary website: https://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/COVIDImmunizationProgram.

If you have any questions, please contact the DPEBB at DPEBimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca