



# The GeriJournal

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## Pharmacy Legislation

The laws governing pharmacy practice have undergone a major revision in the past month. There have been significant cuts in the cost of generic medications and some pharmacy revenues, and a small increase in the dispensing fee, to \$7.00 per prescription.

At the same time, prescription charges to your residents will not change. The \$2.00 and \$6.11 co-payments charges have been left unaltered.

Negotiations with the MOH continue, and the full impact of these changes is not yet known. We do expect, however, that taxpayers will realize significant savings related to medication cost of the Ontario Drug Benefit Program.

We are very excited about one proposed change in the legislation. Some time early next year, LTC pharmacies will be partially remunerated for the clinical services they provide. This change is long overdue, and ultimately, our facilities will be the

beneficiaries of this progressive move.

## Actos Is Now Covered!

There has been a significant advance to the treatment of elderly diabetic residents in our province. Actos no longer requires Section 8 approval, and has bypassed the LU process! It is covered as a regular benefit in the ODB Formulary. Avandia has not enjoyed the same change in coverage status.

Actos is particularly useful for diabetic residents with renal impairment, in whom metformin is contraindicated. Guidelines for Actos use have been issued by the MOH, and are summarized below.

Actos is recommended when maximal doses of glyburide (10mg/day) and/or metformin (2Gm/day) have failed, or are not tolerated, and the HbA1c is  $> 7\%$ .

Actos is also indicated for residents whose HbA1c is  $\leq 7\%$ , where 50% of their fasting glucose readings are  $> 7\text{mmol/L}$  or 50% of their post-prandial plasma glucose levels are greater than 10mmol per litre.

## Generic News

Full generic substitution has now been allowed for Duragesic patches, and Losec

tablets. As a result, much less expensive generic alternatives will be dispensed when these medications are ordered. We have replaced Losec tablets with Apo-Omeprazole capsules, and Duragesic patches with Ranbaxy-Fentanyl patches. These changes will generate tremendous cost savings for ODB, and the new medications should be well tolerated by your residents.

## Eyedrop Stability

A number of eyedrop products, are unstable and must be discarded before the dropper bottle is empty. Xalatan and Cromolyn are two such products. Contamination or improper handling may also render an eyedrop unsafe while a generous supply still remains.

To avert such problems, GeriatRx is offering an automatic renewal system for routinely administered eye-drops. All routine eyedrop orders would be refilled automatically at the start of each month. In addition to the potential infection control benefits of this auto-refill system, there may be time savings, as reorder labels will not have to be retrieved and sent to GeriatRx. Please let us know if you are interested in adopting this system.

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Remembrance  
Day

