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Some drug coverage changes are coming for First Nations in B.C.

BC PharmaCare program welcomes First Nations

First Nations in British Columbia are about to become the first in Canada to join a provincially-based prescription drug program.

Starting October 1 of this year, First Nations Health Authority clients with active Medical Services Plan (MSP) coverage will be eligible for the BC PharmaCare program.

If you have your MSP enrolled through FNHA, the move is automatic. A very small number of clients do not have MSP paid for by FNHA and will continue to have interim coverage with NIHB, ensuring you will get the drugs you need. To enrol in MSP, just contact your FNHA representative as usual.

The transition to PharmaCare is part of an overall plan to bring decision-making about health benefits closer to home and into the hands of First Nations. Bringing the program home to B.C. is our first step in improving it.

We ask that FNHA clients continue to take both their BC Services Card (or CareCard) and Status Card to the pharmacy when filling prescriptions.

Our current clients will continue to be eligible under PharmaCare for the medications they need - but a small number of recipients may have to change to a different comparable drug. If this happens to you and you have any concerns, please discuss it with your doctor or pharmacist.

We suggest that anyone preparing to travel out of province should plan ahead and fill prescriptions here in British Columbia before leaving. PharmaCare is a BC program, and cannot pay for prescriptions filled in other provinces. In most cases, clients are eligible to receive an advance supply lasting up to 100 days. Anyone needing more information before travelling should speak directly with a pharmacist.

Please visit FNHA.ca for information and updates as these changes come online. Anyone with questions about the switch to PharmaCare may call FNHA's Health Benefits phone number toll-free at 1.855.550.5454, or email FNHA at HealthBenefits@fnha.ca.