

Subject: Removal of the Extended Renewal List

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Distribution: **Community and Social Services** - Internal Distribution  
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**BACKGROUND:**

In 2012, the Extended Renewal List (ERL) was developed to provide CSS staff and clients a publically available list of drug products approved through the Health Benefits Exception Committee (HBEC). The list indicates which drug products would not require a termination date for coverage. As long as the client continues to have the drug product dispensed by a community/outpatient pharmacy, exception coverage would continue.

Since its implementation, several challenges with the use of the ERL have come to light:

- The ERL is interpreted by clients and prescribers as a supplement to the Alberta Drug Benefit List (ADBL), influencing prescribing decisions based on what is found within the ERL rather than the ADBL.
  - Clients are often not prescribed drug products found within the ADBL first.
  - The ADBL and the Human Services Drug Benefit Supplement (HSDBS) should be the only publically available lists defining coverage under publicly sponsored low-income health benefit plans.
- HBEC retained the ability to include a termination date on granted exceptions for products on the ERL; however, this leads to confusion amongst CSS staff and clients when the HBEC includes a termination date for drug products found on the ERL.
  - When defining a termination date, the HBEC uses the professional and clinical expertise of the HBEC pharmacists, considering factors such as indication, appropriateness for chronic use, and the duration of exception coverage requested by the prescriber.
  - The ERL is not inclusive of all drug products that are appropriate for long-term use limiting the HBEC's autonomy and judgement in approving extended use of these drugs where appropriate

**INTENT:**

To provide clarity on the duration of exception coverage approved by HBEC, the ERL has been removed. The HBEC will be the sole indicator for the duration of exception coverage approved for drug product requests.

Discontinuation of the ERL reduces red-tape for Government and Albertans in the following ways:

- Allows the HBEC to grant extended exception coverage for drug products as clinically appropriate, thus reducing the need for clients to seek repeated exceptions for chronic use drugs.
- Reduces the uncertainty and resulting inquiries from CSS staff and clients and Alberta Blue Cross (ABC) related to duration of exception coverage.
- Ensures that the ADBL and HSDBS are the only public-facing drug lists defining benefits under government-sponsored low-income plans.
- The administrative tasks related to updates and maintenance on the ERL will no longer be required.
- The removal of the ERL will not impact clients who have already been approved with exception coverage without a termination date.

**POLICY:**

The following operational policies has been updated:

<https://hs.alberta.ca/AWOnline/AISH/7364.html>

<http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/AWOnline/HB/3866.html>