

Social Assistance and You

Developed by the Community

Advocates Network

c/o North End Community Health Centre
2165 Gottingen Street Halifax, NS B3K 3B5

Pharmacare

Everyone who applies for or is getting income assistance in Nova Scotia has the right to pharmacare assistance for prescription drugs and special needs for over-the-counter medications

Pharmacare for persons with disabilities: Persons with disabilities will get pharmacare coverage. You must have a Nova Scotia Health Card. Pharmacare does not always cover all the drugs your doctors may want you to take. You may also be charged a co-pay of \$5 per prescription.

Single Parents and Families: You will get pharmacare for yourselves, your spouses and your children. You must have Nova Scotia Health Cards. You will have to pay the co-pay of \$5 per prescription unless you can convince your worker this is causing hardship – this works sometimes if you and your family use a lot of drugs per month.

Exception Status Drugs: if pharmacare will not cover a prescription drug, ask your doctor to fill out an **Exception Status Drug form** and send it to MSI. Your doctor should know how to do this. If not, ask your pharmacist how your doctor can do this.

Co-pay: Persons with disabilities should not have to pay the co-pay. Ask your worker to waive it. If he or she will not do that, you can appeal the decision.

Transitional Pharmacare: If your income from work makes you no longer eligible for basic needs, you can keep your pharmacare coverage for a year. This can be extended by your worker if you ask. You cannot keep pharmacare if you can get coverage through your workplace.

Extended Pharmacare: If you start getting Canada Pension or other income which makes you no longer eligible for basic needs, or if you are not on assistance but are low income and have a lot of drug costs, you can get extended pharmacare. Your drug costs per month must “create a budget deficit” when your income assistance budget is added up. For example if you are getting \$800 in Canada Pension and your basic budget as a single disabled person is \$729, you will get pharmacare if your monthly drug costs are more than \$70 per month.

Our membership is made up of First Voice people, who are directly affected by social assistance reform, as well as groups, organizations and agencies. Together with first voice people, active members include

**AIDS COALITION OF NOVA SCOTIA ADSUM HOUSE ADSUM COURT ALICE HOUSING
CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSN.—DARTMOUTH BRANCH
CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
COMMUNITY ACTION ON HOMELESSNESS CONNECTIONS CLUBHOUSE
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