



AQPP

Association québécoise
des pharmaciens
propriétaires

**YOU RECEIVE A
SPECIALTY DRUG?
ARE YOUR RIGHTS
PROTECTED?**




Understanding the financial assistance provided by specialty drug manufacturers

RULES GOVERNING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Did you know that an accredited manufacturer or wholesaler or an intermediary may pay all or part of the price of certain drugs, but only in certain very specific circumstances? This is provided for in the *Regulation respecting exceptions to the prohibition against paying or reimbursing the price of a medication or supply covered by the basic prescription drug insurance plan* (RGAM), which went into effect on April 15, 2021. It should be noted that the rules governing the financial assistance that manufacturers provide are specific to each province and may vary from province to province. Therefore, your pharmacist may inform you that financial assistance cannot be provided, in compliance with the laws and regulations in effect in Quebec.

WHAT IS REGARDED AS A FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM A DRUG MANUFACTURER?

The financial assistance granted by a manufacturer, where permitted, can take many forms, such as:

-  Copay card;
-  Reimbursement of the amount of the invoice for the medication;
-  Providing free doses.

FREE DOSES AT THE PHARMACY: HOW DOES THAT WORK?

Where permitted, free doses of drugs sold in pharmacies, often called “compassionate supply”, are generally provided by manufacturers pending the approval of your private insurance or the Régie de l’assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) for the reimbursement of the drug’s cost. The manufacturer does not distribute medication to patients; a pharmacy is usually involved in the process.

The pharmacist dispensing these compassionate doses provides a service and engages his or her professional responsibility. The pharmacist must supervise, among other things, the correct storage of the drug, drug interactions and, in some cases, that a continuous cold chain is maintained. His or her expertise is essential to ensure your treatment's safety. In some cases, manufacturers can pay the fees associated to this professional service. If not, these fees will need to be paid by the patient.



BE WARY OF PATIENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS THAT DIRECT YOU TO A DESIGNATED PHARMACY

Patient support programs (PSP) developed by manufacturers support patients in their treatment and manage, for the most part, the distribution of compassionate supply. However, some traditional PSPs may have business practices that go against the rights of a patient to choose his or her health professional. For instance, they may direct you to a pharmacy designated by their program to receive your treatments.



CHOOSING YOUR PHARMACIST IS YOUR RIGHT!

You have the right to choose your pharmacist. No drug manufacturer, wholesaler, infusion clinic or health professional can compel you to choose a given pharmacy or pressure you in any way. These actions are contrary to the codes of ethics of pharmacists¹ and physicians², and in violation of the Health Insurance Act³.

1. Code of ethics of pharmacists, CQLR c P-10, r. 7, s. 27.

2. Code of ethics of physicians, CQLR, c M-9, r.17, s. 27.

3. Health Insurance Act, CQLR, c. A-29, s. 2..



REPORT WRONGDOING

To report a situation where laws and regulations are not upheld and where you are pressured to obtain a service in a pharmacy that you did not choose, please contact the RAMQ.



WEBSITE

Visit the "Report wrongdoing" section, of the RAMQ website, which you can access at the bottom of the page under "Your rights".



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