

Gleevec (Imatinib)

Effective May 1, 2006, coverage of Gleevec became available to PEI residents diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML) and who meet medical criteria developed in consultation with oncologists at the PEI Cancer Treatment Centre.

Medical Criteria

Coverage will be limited to:

- (a) Treatment of patients who have documented evidence of Philadelphia chromosome positive (Ph+) chronic myeloid leukemia (CML), with an ECOG performance status of 0 - 2*.
- (b) Treatment of patients with C-Kit positive (CD117), metastatic or locally advanced, inoperable gastrointestinal stromal tumours (GIST) and who have an ECOG performance status of 0 - 2*.

* Patients who are asymptomatic and those who are symptomatic and in bed less than 50% of the time.

Coverage must be requested by a hematologist/oncologist. Approvals will be granted for up to one year (12 months) at one time.

Xeloda (Capecitabine)

Effective May 1, 2006, coverage of Xeloda became available to PEI residents diagnosed with either metastatic breast or colorectal cancer and who meet medical criteria developed in consultation with oncologists at the PEI Cancer Treatment Centre.

Medical Criteria

Coverage will be limited to:

- (a) Treatment of metastatic breast cancer as monotherapy in patients who have failed or cannot tolerate taxane-based therapy and who have an ECOG performance status of 0 - 2*.
- (b) Treatment of advanced or metastatic breast cancer in combination with docetaxel in patients who experience disease progression on or after anthracycline-containing chemotherapy and who have an ECOG performance status of 0 - 2*.
- (c) Single agent treatment in patients who have documented evidence of metastatic colorectal cancer, with an ECOG performance status of 0 - 2*, who choose not to receive combination chemotherapy (5-FU/LV/irinotecan) and/or are unable to tolerate first line therapy. This includes patients who are chemotherapy naive or who have progressed 6 months after completion of adjuvant 5-FU/LV therapy.

* Patients who are asymptomatic and those who are symptomatic and in bed less than 50% of the time.

Coverage must be requested by an oncologist. Approvals will be granted for up to 6 months at one time.

Financial criteria for Gleevec and Xeloda

Coverage for Gleevec and Xeloda is based on total net household income. - Depending on the household income from the previous taxation year, the patient's portion of the drug cost may range from zero (\$0) to the full cost of the prescription. Typically, a patient with two children and a net household income of \$45,000 will pay \$162, plus the pharmacy fee, for each prescription. Pharmacy fees range from about \$4.00 to more than \$8.00 depending on where prescriptions are filled.

Application Process for Patients

Patients must fill out a 'High Cost Drugs Program Application' and provide a copy of the Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment or Re-Assessment for each person in your household who completed an income tax return in the previous year. This information should be mailed to PEI Drug Programs office.

Copies of the application form can be found on-line at www.gov.pe.ca/forms under Social Services and Seniors or by contacting the drug programs office.

Application Process for Physicians

All requests for coverage of Gleevec or Xeloda must be made by an oncologist using the proper Exceptional Drug Request form. This information can be mailed or faxed to PEI Drug Programs office.

Up to ten (10) working days should be allowed for processing after both the Exceptional Drug Request and the patient's application are received by the drug programs.

Copies of the 'Exceptional Drug Request' form can be found on-line at www.gov.pe.ca/forms under Social Services and Seniors or by contacting the drug programs office.

For More Information

For more information regarding the coverage of these medications, please contact the PEI Drug Programs office at 368-4947 in Charlottetown or 1-877-577-3737 (toll free in PEI).