Managing the Lantus Shortage

Lantus (insulin glargine) has been on shortage and allotment status since late January 2022, with alternating intermittent availability between three package types (pre-filled pens, cartridges, and vials), for the same dosage form.

The shortage is expected to end June 30, 2022 (at the time of publication). See Drug Shortages Canada or check with your preferred distributor for availability updates.

Given that insulin is a Schedule II drug, it may be dispensed with a prescription, sold to the public with pharmacist intervention, or prescribed under pharmacist Level II prescriptive authority. (Also see SCPP’s Emergency Preparedness Tools for additional tips on managing drug shortages.)

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| Dispense same dosage form using alternative package types (e.g., pre-filled pen, cartridge, or vial). | • Pharmacists may dispense alternative package types depending on availability. | • Patients must be made aware of any changes to their prescription (including package type). | • The Pharmacy and Pharmacy Disciplines Act (PAPD Act) authorizes pharmacists to:  
  o dispense drugs (s. 23(1)); and  
  o advise patients on drug therapy selection and use (s. 23(2)(a)).
|                   |                     |                    |                |
|                   | Documentation:      |                    |                |
|                   | pharmacists must document their care, actions, and decisions for all drugs. | | Note: This does not constitute as a “dosage form change” that is authorized under Pharmacists prescriptive authority (since all formulations of insulin are liquid for intramuscular (IM) injection). |
### Scope of Practice

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(See NAPRA Model Standards of Practice for Canadian Pharmacists).

See page 8, “Interpretation of Dosage Form (Dispensing versus Prescribing)” in Prescriptive Authority - Pharmacists

- Also see “Prescribing” below.

Note: Under the PAPD Act (s. 54), pharmacists are authorized to select and dispense “interchangeable pharmaceutical products” for a drug specified in the prescription, if the drug is deemed interchangeable in the Saskatchewan Drug Plan Formulary.

Basaglar and Lantus are not interchangeable on the formulary. This means pharmacists are not authorized to select and dispense Basaglar from a prescription when Lantus is specified. However, pharmacists may recommend Basaglar as an alternative to Lantus because it is a Schedule II drug. See “Selling” below.

### Selling:

**Recommend medication.**

- Pharmacists may sell Schedule II drugs (e.g., insulin glargine) to the patient without a prescription, including situations where the initial need for a drug has been identified by a practitioner through a prescription.

- When selling medication, pharmacists use their cognitive skills to recommend (e.g. see biosimilar Basaglar).

- **Documentation:** (see “Dispensing” above).

- Pharmacists may consult with the patient’s practitioner on an alternative, especially if there are concerns that any slight fluctuations in blood glucose levels would result in negative health outcomes.

- The PAPD Act authorizes pharmacists to:
  - sell drugs (s. 23(1)); and
  - advise patients on drug therapy selection and use (s. 23(2)(a)).

- **The Drug Schedule Regulations**, subsection 4(3) authorizes pharmacists to sell Schedule II drugs without a prescription.

- Schedule II drugs require professional intervention from the pharmacist at the point of sale and possibly referral to a practitioner.
Scope of Practice | Activity Authorized | Practice Standards | Authorizations |
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• Pharmacists are not authorized to prescribe Basaglar independently. (See “Prescribing” below). | **Drug Coverage:** The Saskatchewan Drug Plan and Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) accept pharmacist recommendations for some non-prescription drugs (e.g. Basaglar). Pharmacists should also consult other third-party drug plans regarding billing non-prescription drugs recommended by the pharmacist. | |

**Prescribing:**

**Prescribe** Basaglar according to a Collaborative Practice Agreement (CPA) – Level II Prescriptive Authority.

• Pharmacists may initiate a prescription for Basaglar when permitted to do so under the conditions of their CPA.

• See Prescriptive Authority – Pharmacists for terms, conditions and standards that apply to all pharmacists in the retail community setting, when prescribing within a CPA.

• The **PAPD Act** authorizes pharmacists to prescribe drugs (s. 23(3)(a)).

• The **SCPP Regulatory Bylaws** (s. 4 of Part K) authorizes pharmacists to prescribe according to the terms, conditions and limitations of a written CPA.