



# Medical Practice Access to PharmaNet

## Providing physicians with access to PharmaNet from their medical offices

PharmaNet is a world class system that records information on all prescriptions dispensed in community pharmacies in British Columbia. The Ministry of Health has launched a new service, Medical Practice Access to PharmaNet (MPAP). This service provides physicians with access from their medical offices to patient medication profiles that include all dispensed medications.

A number of measures are in place to protect patient privacy, including strong security, encryption of transmitted patient data, formal processes to control access, and provisions for patients to lock access to their profiles with a keyword.

## This new eHealth service enables physicians to access patient medication profiles

Physicians who have access to patient medication profiles from their medical offices reap several benefits in dealing with their patients:

- > They do not need to rely on a patient's memory of the medications dispensed to them. A patient's PharmaNet profile provides a more accurate and complete record. Access to this information is vital, especially if language barriers or impaired mental acuity hamper a patient's ability to communicate accurately.
- > The profile shows other medications that may have been prescribed by a specialist, other health care practitioners, or by a walk-in clinic the patient may have visited. Often the family physician may be unaware of these medications.
- > The profile provides a real-time, up-to-the-minute record of all drugs that have been dispensed to a patient. Consequently, the physician can immediately identify potential drug-seeking individuals.
- > Online availability of this information can reduce the need to call the patient's pharmacy for clarification.

*The College of Physicians & Surgeons of British Columbia has worked with the Ministry of Health on medical practice access and supports the expansion of PharmaNet to medical practices throughout British Columbia.*

The province of British Columbia is committed to providing complete, comprehensive and innovative solutions for health care providers.

Medical Practice Access to PharmaNet is just one of a number of initiatives being undertaken over the next three years to improve access to information and provide an Electronic Health Record that will link clinics, medical practices, hospitals, Provincial Health Services agencies, pharmacies and other sites where patients receive health care services.

## How does Medical Practice Access to PharmaNet (MPAP) work?

When prescription drugs are dispensed at a B.C. community pharmacy, they are entered into the PharmaNet system. PharmaNet can store a history of the medications dispensed to a patient.

MPAP assists physicians in medication management by providing point of care access enabling them to:

- > Obtain a record of all medications dispensed to a patient at any community pharmacy in the past 14 months;
- > Request a Drug Utilization Evaluation (DUE) against the patient's medication history for any new prescription;
- > Update a patient's medication profile with drugs administered or drug samples provided in the office.

MPAP provides access to PharmaNet from computers in a medical practice using software provided by an approved vendor (see information below).

To protect patient privacy, patients must provide written consent for each physician who will access their information. The patient's consent needs to be collected only once. This requirement complies with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection Act. For general information, visit the PharmaNet page on the PharmaCare website at: [www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme/pharmanet/netindex.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme/pharmanet/netindex.html).

The Province of B.C. continues to work on enhancements to its Provincial Drug Information System.

Enhancements will include:

- Electronic prescribing from a prescriber's office
- More complete and comprehensive patient medication profiles
- Access to clinical decision support tools
- Access to the provincial formulary, the ability to check a patient's eligibility for a drug and PharmaCare Special Authority support

## What is required to access the MPAP service?

Each physician working at a medical practice needs to register for MPAP individually.

- 1) Visit the MPAP website at: [www.health.gov.bc.ca/ehealth/das/medpract.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/ehealth/das/medpract.html).
- 2) From the list of software vendors approved by the Ministry of Health, choose and contact the vendor from whom you will obtain the software for your connection to PharmaNet. There is no cost from the Ministry of Health for access to PharmaNet, the only cost for the physician is their hardware and software to link to PharmaNet.
- 3) Complete a registration form online identifying all individuals who will access PharmaNet on the physician's behalf.
- 4) Complete and sign a Data Access Agreement and mail it to the Ministry of Health.

When the registration form and Data Access Agreement have been processed, the Ministry of Health's Data Access Services team will work with you to establish your connection to PharmaNet. For further information, contact us at [HLTH.DataAccessServices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HLTH.DataAccessServices@gov.bc.ca).

The use of PharmaNet is not intended as a substitute for professional judgment. Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and cannot be relied upon as complete. The absence of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate or effective in any given patient. Health care professionals should confirm information obtained from PharmaNet, and ensure no additional relevant information exists, before making patient care decisions.