

Change in “No substitution” Notations in Quebec

The Quebec government is amending rules surrounding the use of the “No substitution” notations on prescriptions.

Previously when a prescriber indicated “No substitution” on a prescription, this would allow the patient to receive reimbursement for the brand name drug, as long as there was justification corresponding to an allergy or intolerance.

Due to increasing options of generic drugs or similar treatments becoming available on the market, pharmacists are now often able to select an effective, lower-cost alternative that does not contain the specific ingredients that may result in an allergic reaction or intolerance for the patient. In all cases, the lowest-cost, appropriate medication will be dispensed.

Effective February 5, 2025, justification codes for brand name exceptions will no longer be accepted by the Province of Quebec for a variety of medications including, but not limited to, treatments for high cholesterol, hypertension, glaucoma, diabetes, antidepressants, proton pump inhibitors, 5HT-1 receptor agonists for migraine treatment, and anticoagulants.

Any members with existing “No substitution” approvals prior to February 5, 2025, will continue to receive coverage. While the Province of Quebec is implementing these changes, it’s important to note insurers have the option to adopt them. Employees are encouraged to refer to their booklets for the most up-to-date and detailed information about their coverage.

