



PATIENTS DENIED ACCESS TO NOVEL MEDICINES BY CANADA

Delays and Layers of Bureaucracy Leave Patients Struggling to Access Treatments



In Canada, drugs go through a very long multistep process to determine reimbursement. This results in an environment in which, even when drugs are approved for use, there are huge delays with an average of 736 days from approval to access. After a drug is approved for use, it must undergo a pricing review by the Patented Medicine Pricing Review Board (PMPRB), which sets a ceiling price for a drug. It then undergoes a reimbursement review by Canada's Drug Agency (CDA-AMC). CDA-AMC conducts cost-effectiveness assessments that rely on the Quality-Adjusted Life Year (QALY) to determine whether the drug has "value" and should be reimbursed. The QALY is known to discriminate against older patients, those with chronic illnesses and people with disabilities. Following that review, provinces conduct their own assessments, some of which also include QALYs, to determine whether they will make the drug available. This arduous and discriminatory process leads to delays and lack of access for Canadian patients.

Treatment for Debilitating Migraines not Available

Carvykti, a treatment approved in the United States since 2022, allowed one-third of patients with relapsed or refractory multiple myeloma to achieve progression-free survival of five years or more after a single infusion. Despite this high rate of success, Canadians still do not have access to the treatment. It has been approved by Health Canada as safe and effective for over two years, but has been **held up in deliberations with the reimbursement bodies**, leaving Canadian patients without an effective treatment option.

Policymakers must reject importing foreign health care values that would devalue people with disabilities and ration care for all Americans.

Rare Disease Patients Cannot Access Novel Therapies

Canadian patients with rare diseases struggle to access treatments they need with only 60% of treatments for rare diseases making it into the country. Madi Vanstone, a young woman with Cystic Fibrosis had to **fight for over two years** for Ontario to cover the treatment that brought her lung function back to that of a healthy child when she was previously on a lung transplant list at 11 years old.

Patients with Epilepsy Lack Access to Needed Drug

Patients in Quebec are unable to access an epilepsy drug that has been available in the United States for over four years. **Dr. Mark Keezer, a prominent epilepsy specialist has said he cannot understand why the drug is not available** when it would allow him to treat patients, avoid unnecessary surgeries, and save the health system thousands of dollars.

More Info
www.pipcpatients.org