

FORMULARY SECTION Policy, Procedure and Guidance	Page 1 of 4	
SUBJECT/TITLE FPP-01 Formulary Rationale and Principles	ORIGINAL DATE: REVISIONS:	21-11-2003 04-05-2007 08-07-2008 24-01-2013 24-02-2026

PREAMBLE

The Calgary Type A Continuing Care Home (CCH) Formulary identifies drug therapies with funding support for residents living in Assisted Living Alberta (ALA) contracted Type A CCHs in the Calgary area. The Formulary is established and maintained by the Calgary Type A Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee.

The Formulary is a digital collection of documents that are updated regularly as medical practice, needs and understanding evolve. The Formulary is accessed through the Alberta Health Services (AHS) website and can be found here: [Continuing Care Type A Pharmacy - Calgary Zone | Alberta Health Services](#)

It addresses both clinical and administrative needs, supports appropriate prescribing, drug use and monitoring in continuing care. Stakeholders are encouraged to provide comments and suggestions to facilitate the ongoing development of the Formulary.

The Committee, along with its administrative sponsor, Integrated Supportive and Facility Living (ISFL), recognizes that discrepancies in drug benefits exist between the community, other continuing care streams, and the acute care system. The Committee considers coverage criteria and restrictions from all sources in determining inclusion on the Type A CCH Formulary while balancing clinical need, best practice standards, and fiscal responsibility in decision making.

Drugs listed on the Formulary and used in accordance with its criteria and processes are eligible for funding. Drugs not listed or not used as per Formulary criteria are considered non-formulary (NF) and are not routinely funded. NF drug therapy may be funded if a well-supported request is submitted to ISFL Drug Management for review and approval.

APPLICABILITY

For ISFL drug funding support, compliance with the Formulary, its policies, procedures and other associated documents is required by persons acting on behalf of ISFL-Type A CCH programs in Calgary, including contracted service providers as necessary, who provide care to residents living in Type A CCHs in Calgary and surrounding areas.

FORMULARY SECTION Policy, Procedure and Guidance	Page 2 of 4	
SUBJECT/TITLE FPP-01 Formulary Rationale and Principles	ORIGINAL DATE: REVISIONS:	21-11-2003 04-05-2007 08-07-2008 24-01-2013 24-02-2026

FORMULARY DESCRIPTION AND PRINCIPLES

The Formulary is a collection containing Formulary Policies, Procedures and Guidance (FPP) for formulary and non-formulary drug use, the Drug Listing of regular benefits (F), sections for Special Authorization (SA) drug listings, Restricted Status (RS) drug listings, Therapeutic Substitutions (TS), and additional educational resources. The Committee evaluates drug listings based on local prescribing practices, consultations with medical practitioners and prescribing experts, evidence-based medicine, clinical effectiveness, patient safety, and cost-effectiveness.

Review for Formulary Compliance and Need for Form Submission

Upon receipt of a prescription, the contracted pharmacy provider determines if the drug is listed on the Formulary, and whether the indication and conditions for use meet the criteria for coverage. If in compliance with listing criteria, the pharmacy provider can provide the drug and invoice ISFL as per contractual arrangements. Compliance with drug listing criteria must be documented in the resident record. When required, the appropriate form must be submitted to ISFL Drug Management.

At any time during the funding period, ISFL Drug Management reserves the right to request evidence of formulary compliance from the prescriber or contracted pharmacy provider.

Standard Process for Form Submission

Prior approval is required for ISFL funding of NF drugs except during grace period funding as further described in **FPP-03 – Non-Formulary Drug Request** or when the drug is urgently needed to support resident care. Grace period funding or urgent funding does not guarantee ongoing coverage and requires a follow-up NF submission for approval.

Exceptions to Coverage Under the Grace Period and Non-Formulary Funding

High cost NF drugs should be prioritized for funding assessment and reviewed upon admission. Over-the-counter products and medical devices, unless listed on the Formulary, are not eligible for coverage under the Grace Period or NF funding. The resident or their agent will need to pay for these products as arranged through the contracted pharmacy provider.

FORMULARY SECTION Policy, Procedure and Guidance	Page 3 of 4	
SUBJECT/TITLE FPP-01 Formulary Rationale and Principles	ORIGINAL DATE: REVISIONS:	21-11-2003 04-05-2007 08-07-2008 24-01-2013 24-02-2026

Special Authorization drug use requires that a form to be submitted and reviewed by ISFL Drug Management. It is expected the contracted pharmacy provider submits the SA request in a timely manner as per instructions on the form. This is to allow for review by Drug Management to ensure compliance with Formulary criteria, and where appropriate, to assess drug outcomes.

Least Cost Alternative (LCA), alternate strengths, and alternate formulations

Contracted pharmacy providers are expected to dispense the lowest-cost clinically appropriate option for each drug listing whenever possible. This typically includes generic medications or alternative trade-name products equivalent to the reference product. Similarly, it is expected they will use the lowest cost dosage forms whenever possible and as clinically appropriate (e.g., regular tablets instead of quick-dissolve tablets, or oral solids instead of liquids). Where a drug listed on the Formulary is available in alternate strengths and formulations, funding for the non-listed drug product or strength is not included.

Compounded Products

Most compounded products are non-formulary and require approval for coverage via the **Compound Coverage Criteria** process. See **FPP-10** for further detail.

Therapeutic Substitution

To streamline drug therapy, certain NF drug orders may be routinely substituted with therapeutically equivalent alternatives, as approved by the Committee. **See FPP-03 - Non-Formulary Drug Requests** for further detail.

Vaccines

The Calgary Type A CCH Formulary excludes funding for any vaccinations. For more information on the Government of Alberta publicly funded vaccinations, see [Immunization and routine immunization schedule | Alberta.ca](#)

FORMULARY SECTION Policy, Procedure and Guidance	Page 4 of 4	
SUBJECT/TITLE FPP-01 Formulary Rationale and Principles	ORIGINAL DATE: REVISIONS:	21-11-2003 04-05-2007 08-07-2008 24-01-2013 24-02-2026

Alternate Sources of Drug Funding

ISFL funding does not apply to drug products covered by specialized drug benefit programs administered by the Government of Alberta. For more information see [Specialized drug benefits | Alberta.ca](#)

Residents may have alternate sources of drug coverage such as Alberta drug benefits (e.g. Seniors, Palliative, Assured income for the Severely Handicapped), federal drug benefits, or private insurance. These sources may assist with funding a non-formulary drug, provided it is eligible under the respective program. If no alternate funding is available and coverage is denied or not eligible through the Non-Formulary Drug Request process, the resident or their agent will be responsible for payment, as arranged through the contracted pharmacy provider.