



## Frequently Asked Questions—Practitioners

### **Q: What is the Saskatchewan Immune Globulin (IG) Stewardship Program?**

A: This program was created to oversee Saskatchewan's IG use and provide safe quality care to the residents.

### **Q: Why is this important?**

A: An impending world-wide shortage of IG supply may cause problems for those who need IG products. IG is a critical treatment for some people with underlying health conditions, and may be used in clinical situations. The goal is to ensure that IG is used only for approved reasons, in the right amounts, and for only as long as needed.

### **Q: Why is there an impending shortage?**

A: The world-wide supply of IG was already low before the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, the pandemic has made IG production difficult to the point that demand for IG may be higher than supply in Canada by late 2021. Provincial stewardship and conservation measures need to be started as soon as possible to ensure that IG is available for those who need it most.

### **Q: How will patients who need IG therapy continue to receive it?**

A: Patients who are currently receiving IG treatment will continue the same process until they are up for renewal. When patients visit their prescribing doctors, they will have their weight and dose verified. The IG Stewardship Program will notify the patient's prescribing doctor about the possibility of subcutaneous administration for future doses. The prescribing doctor will contact the patient to notify them of the change and ensure supplies/set-up are available.

### **Q: What approach have other provinces taken?**

A: Many other provinces have IG stewardship programs which influenced the development of this program. Through the Prairie Collaborative Immune Globulin (IG) Utilization Management Framework project, a clinical guideline for the criteria of IG was created. As a result, it is the expectation that Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba create a stewardship program to conserve IG while keeping patients safe.



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### **Q: What has been done in Saskatchewan so far?**

A: Work on IG stewardship in Saskatchewan has been in development for a number of months. Work to date includes:

- Multidisciplinary collaboration with clinical standards to develop a provincial Adult 10% Intravenous Immune Globulin (IVIG) Practitioner Order Set
- Development of an interim IVIG prescriber/patient registry
- Development of education and communication plans to support rollout
- Recruitment of nurse navigators, data analyst, office administrative assistant, and project manager positions

### **Q: What are the key outcomes of this work?**

A: The key outcomes of this work include:

- Create a patient/provider registry to collect data including patient medical condition, prescriber/specialty information, adjusted body weight dosing calculations, duration of orders, and patient outcomes
- Develop a provincial adult 10% IVIG practitioner order set
- Facilitate brand switching
- Province-wide expansion of Smart Pump 'generic' line for 10% IVIG products
- Configure laboratory information system (LIS) for all IG products and vial doses
- Control IG inventory
- Reduce IG wastage

### **Q: What is the criteria or definition of an urgent order for IG?**

A: Outpatient IG orders are considered non-urgent, and inpatient IG orders are considered urgent.

### **Q: Who will be reviewing the IG orders?**

A: The nurse navigators will be reviewing all outpatient orders prior to notifying the transfusion medicine lab and the infusion clinic. The transfusion medicine lab will review all inpatient orders. The IG Stewardship Program staff will enter the order details from both outpatient and inpatient clinics into the patient registry.



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### **Q: What is the timeline for this work to be completed?**

A: With the risk for Canadian IG demands being higher than supply starting in late 2021, the timelines for this work are urgent. The IG stewardship program has been under active development over the last few months and is set to go-live on November 1, 2021.

### **Q: What are the responsibilities of the IG nurse navigators?**

A: Two part-time nurse navigator positions have been filled; one in Regina and one in Saskatoon. Together, they will cover regular office hours, excluding statutory holidays. After hour requests will be reviewed by the transfusion medicine lab. The nurse navigators will screen adult 10% IVIG practitioner order sets against the tri-provincial guideline “*Criteria for the Clinical Use of Immune Globulin*” to determine and verify appropriateness of IG. They will support prescribing physicians and facilitate the adjudication and appeal processes between the prescriber and the transfusion medicine physician. Upon the prescriber’s request, the IG nurse navigators will forward patients’ information regarding the possibility of subcutaneous immune globulin administration for future doses.

### **Q: Should the patient’s weight be taken at every office visit?**

A: Yes. The prescribing dose is based on the most recent patient weight.

### **Q: Will the prescribers be notified of a dose discrepancy?**

A: If the nurse navigators find that the dose is incorrectly ordered, they will contact the prescribing doctor to correct the order.