

Date:	Jan 27, 2022
To:	NH Physicians, Nurses, and Pharmacists
From:	NH Therapeutics Committee
Re:	Update: Baricitinib & REGEN-COV (Monoclonal Antibody) for COVID-19

1) Baricitinib

In light of the ongoing shortage of tocilizumab and the current stability of baricitinib supply, the BC COVID Therapeutics Committee (BCCTC) has updated their [clinical recommendations](#) for use of baricitinib based on the originally evaluated evidence. This update results in expanding the patient population for which this medication is recommended to now include use in severely ill patients requiring supplemental oxygen. Baricitinib should be administered within 24 hours of initiation or change in baseline use of oxygen due to COVID-19 pneumonia (not from other causes such as heart failure, pulmonary embolism, etc.).

The previously developed NH order set and [drug information sheet](#) will be updated to reflect this change to continue facilitating baricitinib prescribing that aligns with the BCCTC recommendations. The regional order set will provide clinicians with the expanded inclusion criteria.

As a reminder, baricitinib comes as an oral tablet that can also be given via tube. It is a hazardous drug, and members from the NH Regional Hazardous Drug working group (OH&S, PPO, Pharmacy) have developed a Safe Work Practice document to guide staff through safe administration procedures.

Due to stability of baricitinib supply, the previously implemented requirement of obtaining a second clinical opinion from an Intensivist or Internist working in ICU is no longer required. NH Pharmacy Services will continue to closely monitor supply of both tocilizumab and baricitinib and transfer available stock to NH sites as required to ensure equitable access as much as possible. Thank you for understanding the fluid nature of this situation. NH Pharmacy Services will continue to provide updates as required.

2) REGEN-COV

In follow up to the memo from December 21, 2021 (REGEN-COV: Monoclonal Antibody Regimen for COVID-19 inpatients), please note some important new information regarding this treatment option.

REGEN-COV (casirivimab + imdevimab) is a combination of two monoclonal antibodies that has been evaluated in various settings for management of COVID-19. The greatest benefit was seen in seronegative, moderate to severely ill inpatients (RECOVERY trial) when administered within 10 days of symptom onset; **however**, evidence has shown that REGEN-COV is **not** effective against the omicron variant (which is now the most dominant strain across BC). As such, the BC COVID Therapeutics Committee (CTC) has updated the provincial guidelines on the [BC CDC website](#) to remove REGEN-COV as a viable treatment option for COVID-19 inpatients at this time. The NH regional order set that was developed in December 2021 will also be pulled from circulation and no longer available on NH online platforms. Please remove any printed copies from your units/sites.

As information on COVID-19 treatment options continues to evolve rapidly, please refer to [the BC CTC guidelines](#) for the most up-to-date information.

For information on NH COVID-19 therapy supplies and availability contact:
Regional Medication Use Management Pharmacists: mumpharmacist@northernhealth.ca.