

INFOBulletin

Keeping health care providers informed of payment, policy or program changes

To: Physicians

Published By: Claims Services Branch

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Re: Special Diet Allowance Program

The Special Diet Allowance (SDA) program, administered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), helps eligible clients with the extra costs of a special diet required for certain medical conditions. The specific medical conditions are published by MCSS at:

http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/programs/social/sda_medical_conditions.aspx

SDA Eligibility Requirements

The attached MCSS Information Bulletin was recently issued to clarify the SDA eligibility requirements for the following medical conditions:

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Osteoporosis

The information has been provided to help ensure that the SDA for the above conditions is prescribed consistently across Ontario.

SDA Application Form Completion Fee

MCSS currently provides a payment of \$20 (for the completion of an SDA application form) which can be claimed via a "K055" fee code billing to the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). Please note this is not an insured service under OHIP and OHIP is simply acting as a paying agent on behalf of MCSS.

Additional information for health care professionals is provided by MCSS at:

http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/programs/social/special_diet_health_care.aspx



**Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS)
Information Bulletin**

**Special Diet Allowance: Eligibility Requirements for
Hypertension, Osteoporosis and Diabetes**

BACKGROUND

The Special Diet Allowance (SDA) helps Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works recipients with the extra costs of a special diet for certain eligible medical conditions.

The Special Diet Allowance application form lists the eligible medical conditions.

This bulletin clarifies what the eligibility requirements are for hypertension, osteoporosis and diabetes.

MCSS is providing this information to help ensure that the Special Diet Allowance for these conditions is prescribed consistently across the province.

CLARIFICATION

Hypertension

Question: What are the eligibility requirements for a Special Diet Allowance for hypertension?

Answer: According to the Canadian Hypertension Education Program's most recent recommendation (2011), an **untreated person** is defined as having hypertension if they have:

- 1) ≥ 160 systolic blood pressure or ≥ 100 diastolic blood pressure on three consecutive clinic visits

OR

- 2) ≥ 140 systolic blood pressure or ≥ 90 diastolic blood pressure on four or more consecutive clinic visits

Osteoporosis

Question: What are the eligibility requirements for a Special Diet Allowance for osteoporosis?

Answer: Considering the World Health Organization definition of osteoporosis, a person is defined as having osteoporosis if they have:

- 1) T score < -2.5 on bone density studies

AND/OR

- 2) Clinical evidence of a fragility fracture

Note the Special Diet Allowance for osteoporosis is the same amount whether the applicant has one or both clinical findings.

Diabetes

Question: What are the eligibility requirements for a Special Diet Allowance for diabetes?

Answer: For purposes of the Special Diet Allowance, a person is defined as having diabetes if they meet the following World Health Organization criteria:

- 1) A fasting blood glucose level of 6.1 mm to 6.9 mm and a two hour glucose tolerance test of 7.8 mm to 11.0 mm (with a fasting blood glucose < 6.1mm)

OR

- 2) A glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c) between 5.7 percent and 6.4 percent

OR

- 3) Levels above these limits

Note many health care professionals interpret criteria 1) and 2) as pre-diabetes and levels above these limits as diabetes (World Health Organization). A Special Diet Allowance applicant with any of these specific lab results should be captured within the diabetes category.