



ALBERTA
HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Office of the Minister

M.O. # 83 /2009

WHEREAS the World Health Organization has declared a stage 6 pandemic due to the human-to-human transmission of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus;

WHEREAS the Chief Medical Officer of Health has advised that the presence of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus in Alberta poses a significant risk of becoming a public health emergency within the meaning of that term in the *Public Health Act*;

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has established a plan for managing pandemic H1N1 influenza that includes the use of anti-viral medications as a mitigation strategy to provide for the early treatment of individuals presenting with symptoms of influenza-like illness (ILI symptoms) who may be ill with pandemic H1N1 influenza, or who are at high risk if they become ill with the influenza,

WHEREAS Alberta Health Services is establishing AHS Influenza Assessment Centres (IAC) to assess persons who present with ILI symptoms to determine if they should be prescribed oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) for the purposes of alleviating the severity or burden of pandemic H1N1 influenza in Alberta;

WHEREAS Alberta Health Services is requesting that the role of registered nurses in the IACs be broadened regarding their authority to prescribe oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) to enable Albertans to have prompt access to anti-viral medications when they need it to alleviate the effect of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus;

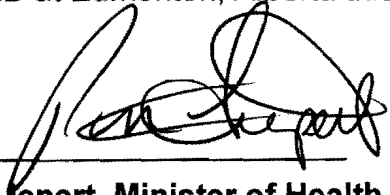
WHEREAS consultations have been undertaken with the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta about the need to broaden the scope of practice of registered nurses for the purposes of the IACs and the management of pandemic H1N1 influenza;

THEREFORE, I, RON LIEPERT, Minister of Health and Wellness, pursuant to section 3.1 of Schedule 7.1 of the *Government Organization Act*, authorize the persons identified in the Schedule appended to this Order to perform the following restricted activity, on the terms and conditions set out in the appended Schedule and the appended Attachments A and B:

- To prescribe oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) when working in AHS-established Influenza Assessment Centres.

This Order expires on January 31, 2010, unless renewed by a further Ministerial Order.

DATED at Edmonton, Alberta this 29 day of October, 2009.



Ron Liepert, Minister of Health and Wellness

SCHEDULE TO M.O. 83/2009

Persons Specially Authorized to Prescribe Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®)

This Ministerial Order applies to:

- All regulated members of the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta (CARNA) who are registered on the Registered Nurse register, are in good standing with the CARNA, and who have a minimum of two years of relevant clinical experience that includes assessment of children and/or adults with influenza like illness or other respiratory illness (the Authorized Person).

Terms and Conditions applicable to Performance of the Restricted Activity Authorized in this Ministerial Order

An Authorized Person may only exercise the restricted activity of prescribing oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) to a patient who attends at an AHS-established Influenza Assessment Centre (IAC):

- in accordance with the requirements of Attachment "A" and the Clinical Decision-Making Tool for Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza set out in Attachment "B";
- provided at all times that a physician or a nurse practitioner is on-site at the IAC and readily available for consultation with the patient and the Authorized Person;
- provided at all times that a pharmacist is available, either on or off-site, for consultation with the Authorized Person; and
- the Authorized Person has personally examined the patient prior to prescribing oseltamivir (Tamiflu®).

The CARNA will retain oversight of the activities of the Authorized Persons within the scope of the *Health Professions Act*, the Registered Nurses Profession Regulation AR 232/2005 and this Ministerial Order.

ATTACHMENT "A" TO M.O. 83/2009

PRESCRIBING ANTIVIRALS

To be most effective, antiviral medication should be started as soon as possible upon onset of clinical illness, ideally within 48 hours of symptom onset. Because efficacy is theoretically possible, some experts have recommended that it could be acceptable to start antivirals later than 48 hours after symptom onset, particularly in severe and critical cases.

Antiviral medication should ideally be used according to the following guidelines:

1. Use of antiviral medications is strongly recommended in hospitalized and/or severely ill individuals with influenza-like illness (see "Indicators of severe illness" in attached Clinical Decision-Making Tool in Attachment "B").
2. Antiviral medications are recommended for individuals at higher risk for influenza-related complications (see "Risk Factors" in attached Clinical Decision-Making Tool in Attachment "B").
3. **Antivirals are NOT recommended for prophylaxis against influenza because of the RISK OF RESISTANCE.** They are also usually not recommended for the treatment of mild cases. However, clinical judgment remains paramount.

Two situations have appeared to cause resistance to oseltamivir (Tamiflu[®]): when used for prophylaxis and in prolonged use in immunosuppressed individuals. Broad antiviral use could also lead to resistance. Resistance to oseltamivir (Tamiflu[®]) would significantly impair Alberta's ability to effectively treat individuals.

CHOICE OF ANTIVIRAL FOR EARLY TREATMENT

1. **Tamiflu[®] (oseltamivir)** is a first-line treatment, including for infants less than one (1) year of age and pregnant and breastfeeding women, including up to four (4) weeks post-partum. Dosage adjustments are required for individuals with impaired creatinine clearance.

A Tamiflu[®] monograph can be located at:

<http://www.rochecanada.com>