

Potential costs from therapeutic substitution of proton pump inhibitor (PPI) drugs in Quebec.

Description

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On March 15, 2013 Quebec's ministry of health announced changes to its reimbursement policy for proton pump inhibitor (PPI) drugs covered under the public prescription drug insurance plan le régime public d'assurance médicaments (RGAM) du Québec, effective October 1, 2013. The new policy sets the maximum price payable (MPP) for all PPI drugs at \$.55 per unit and will financially penalize patients who don't switch to PPI drugs that are priced under the MPP. It follows a study by the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux (INESSS) that deemed all PPI drugs to be therapeutically equivalent though they are bio-chemically different products. INESSS projected that RGAM will save between \$32 million and \$41 million annually from the policy change. Is this estimate correct? What can Quebec learn from British Columbia's previous experience with a similar policy change?

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