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Jan 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

Ms. Cheryl deBoer,  
Section of Policy and Regulation,  
Ministry of Health,  
PO Box 9652, STN PROV GOVT,  
Victoria, BC, V8W 9P4

Dear Ms. deBoer,

I am writing on behalf of the BC Lymphedema Association (BCLA) and the patients who are living with this condition in British Columbia. It is our understanding that Pharmacare provides limited coverage for breast cancer patients in need of compression garments for management of breast cancer associated lymphedema (BCAL). It has been the experience of our members that access to funding support has been at best inconsistent and at worst non-existent.

Statistically, up to twenty percent of woman who are living with a diagnosis of breast cancer will experience Lymphedema LE. This is considered a consequence of management of this condition due to damage to the lymphatic system resulting from a mastectomy, lymph node dissection and/or radiotherapy. Not all women who develop this condition have undergone a mastectomy and of those that do, not all chose to have breast prosthesis. As an example, some choose to undergo reconstruction. It is our understanding that one of the criteria to determine funding relates to whether a woman has been prescribed breast prosthesis. As well, many of our members have lymphedema for other reasons for example due to management of gynaecological malignancies, prostate cancer and lymphomas. They are currently not eligible for funding from Pharmacare.

The BCLA would appreciate if the Ministry of Health and more specifically Pharmacare would review their policy and procedures as it relates to funding for compression garments.

I look forward to a response at your earliest convenience.

Best regards

Christine Chandler  
President BCLA