

# Smoking Cessation Aids Coverage in Canada

## Cessation aid legend:

-  Bupropion (BUP)
-  Varenicline (VAR)
-  Cytisine (CYT)
-  Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT, e.g., patch, gum, lozenge, mist, inhaler)

## Eligibility:

-  Yellow glow indicates limited access

## Health professionals who can prescribe cessation aids

-  Pharmacists
-  Physicians: billing code general (e.g., Health Promotion Counselling)
-  Physicians: billing code smoking cessation-specific
-  Nurse Practitioners
-  Dentists
-  Other allied health professionals

## FEDERAL (Indigenous Services Canada)

### Non-Insured Health Benefits Program (NIHB)

*Started in 2001*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** Clients registered with NIHB are eligible to receive up to 252 patches AND one 12-wk course of treatment of gums, lozenges, and inhalers, or spray in 12-mo period. Oral meds (BUP and VAR) with a prescription are also covered.



## BRITISH COLUMBIA ♦♦♦×

### BC Smoking Cessation Program

*Started in 2011*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT:** BC resident, active and valid Medical Services Plan coverage, obtain from community pharmacy, free for up to 12 continuous wk/yr with declaration form.  
**BUP/VAR:** BC resident, active and valid Medical Services Plan coverage. Beneficiaries in FairPharmaCare plan have coverage for up to 12 continuous wk/yr, or beneficiaries in PharmaCare Plans B, C, G, or W eligible for free meds for up to 12 continuous wk/yr.

## YUKON ♦♦♦

### Quitpath

*Started in 2009*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT:** 18+ and enrolled in Quitpath, free 12 wk/yr.  
**Pharmacare and Extended Health Benefits**  
*Started in 1990s*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**BUP/VAR:** Registered with the Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan and age 65+ or aged 60+ and married to resident who is 65+. Up to 12 continuous wk/yr (165 tablets).

## NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ♦♦♦

**Northwest Territories Health Care Plan**  
*Started in 2014*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** 18+ and not covered by NIHB or other benefit program, free for 12 wk/yr.

## NUNAVUT ♦♦♦

**Extended Health Benefits**  
*Started in 2011*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** 18+ and not covered by NIHB or other benefit program, free for 12 wk/yr.

## NEW BRUNSWICK ■♦♦

**New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program (NBPDP) and New Brunswick Drug Plan**  
*Started in 2014*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** 18+ and covered by the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program (NBPDP) or New Brunswick Drug Plan, eligible for reimbursed meds for 12 wk/yr. Special authorization can cover an additional 12 weeks/84 patches or an additional 126 patches for patients accessing OMSC sites.

## ALBERTA ■♦♦

### Alberta Health Supplementary Health Benefit Program/Alberta Drug Benefit List

*Started in 1998*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT:** Recipients enrolled in provincial social support programs are eligible for a lifetime maximum of \$1,000 NRT coverage.  
**BUP:** Recipients of Non-Group Coverage or enrolled in provincial social support programs are eligible for 12 wk/yr of BUP coverage.  
**VAR (started in 2011):** Recipients of Non-Group Coverage or enrolled in provincial social support programs are eligible for 12 wk/yr of VAR coverage. Special authorization for 24 wk/yr in conjunction with smoking cessation counselling.  
**QuitCore**  
*Started in 2016*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** Individuals enrolled in QuitCore program are eligible for up to \$500 of NRT, VAR or BUP coverage through Alberta Blue Cross once/yr. Individuals who re-enroll in QuitCore a second time a minimum of a year after first attending, get a second set of coverage.

## SASKATCHEWAN ■♦♦×

**Saskatchewan Drug Plan**  
*Started in 2011*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**BUP/VAR:** Covered under Supplementary Health Plan (Plan 1 receive for reduced cost, Plan 2 and 3 receive for free), 12 wk/yr; or covered under Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living receive for free, 12 wk/yr; or covered under Special Support Program, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Saskatchewan Income Plan, Family Health Benefits, Seniors' Plan receive for reduced cost, 12 wk/yr.

## MANITOBA ■♦♦×

**Manitoba Pharmacare**  
*Started in 2011*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**VAR:** 18+ and covered by Pharmacare eligible for reduced cost meds (\$350) for 12 wk/yr, recipients of the Manitoba Employment and Income Assistance Program do not pay deductible.

## ONTARIO ■♦♦×

**Ontario Drug Benefit Program**  
*Started in 2011*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**BUP/VAR:** Adults 18+ and covered by Ontario Drug Benefit Program are eligible for coverage for prescription medications for smoking cessation up to 12 wk/yr provided they are enrolled in a smoking cessation program.

## QUEBEC ■♦♦

**Quebec Public Prescription Drug Insurance Program**  
*Started in 2000*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** Seniors, individuals on social assistance, or individuals without health insurance eligible for free meds and NRT for 12 wk/yr.

## NOVA SCOTIA ■♦♦

**Stop Smoking Services**  
*Started in 2001*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/VAR:** Some health zones subsidize the cost of NRT and/or VAR.  
**NS Formulary**  
*Started in 2019*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**BUP/VAR:** Recipients of Nova Scotia Pharmacare Programs, 12 wk/yr.

## NEWFOUNDLAND ■♦♦ AND LABRADOR

### Newfoundland and Labrador Smoking Cessation Program for Individuals with Low Income

*Started in 2014*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** 18+ who are registered under the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program's Access, Foundation, or 65+ Plans are eligible to receive up to 12 continuous wks (84 days) of one prescription drug (Champix® or Zyban®) or nicotine replacement product (patch, gum, lozenge or inhaler) within a 365-day period with a co-pay arrangement up to \$75/year. In cases where more than 21mg of the nicotine patch per day is needed upon initiation of NRT, health care providers can apply under the special authorization process detailing the required dose, duration and clinical rationale.

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND ■♦♦×

**Prince Edward Island Smoking Cessation Program**  
*Started in 2019*  
 ELIGIBILITY DETAILS:  
**NRT/BUP/VAR:** PEI residents can be covered for one complete course of treatment, for a minimum of 12 wks.

Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (2020). *Leading Practices in Clinical Smoking Cessation: Coverage of Cessation Aids (v7.0)*. Available at: [Partnershipagainstcancer.ca/cessationaidscoverage](https://partnershipagainstcancer.ca/cessationaidscoverage)  
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