

Anemia management update

The BC Renal Agency [anemia management protocols](#) for kidney patients in the province were updated as of September 2014. This latest update follows previous refinements of the protocols and incorporates the latest Canadian Society of Nephrology laboratory targets.

Revisions to the protocols include a lower hemoglobin target for patients to minimize the risk of adverse events caused by unnecessary exposure to certain anemia management drugs.

The agency's Pharmacy and Formulary Committee developed the original protocol, which was launched for province-wide adoption in 2009. Individual protocols for CKD, facility-based dialysis, PD and home hemodialysis were developed later. The protocols standardize anemia control based on target ranges for iron and hemoglobin levels in the blood. They also specify which drugs are to be used to maintain those levels. In 2013, the Canadian Society of Nephrology adopted the BC protocols for use across Canada.

Since their introduction, the protocols have proven successful in helping BC renal patients reach anemia treatment targets sooner and to stay at target levels longer.

Standardized treatment has also led to reduced use of expensive anemia management drugs, resulting in a cost saving of more than \$10 million over the past five years.

This summer, the Island Health Renal Program was recognized with a Leading Practice award from Accreditation Canada for its use of the anemia management protocols.
