

## **News release: Treatment available for adult COVID-19 outpatients**

March 4, 2021

This morning, Dr. Gordon Dow, Regional Infectious Diseases Medical Director, Horizon Health Network, and co-chair of Horizon's Infectious Disease / Medical Microbiology Advisory Group spoke to media on a treatment now available for adult COVID-19 outpatients in New Brunswick. Please read the following news release for more information.

### **Treatment Now Available for Adult COVID-19 Outpatients in New Brunswick**

**(MONCTON) Tuesday, May 4, 2021** – Adult outpatients with symptomatic mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in New Brunswick can now be prescribed a medication that may shorten their recovery and reduce their trips to their primary care provider and/or emergency departments.

Horizon's Infectious Disease / Medical Microbiology Advisory Group has informed primary care providers they may consider prescribing **inhaled budesonide** on a case-by-case basis to ambulatory adult patients with symptomatic COVID-19 who meet certain criteria.

The treatment is for outpatients with symptomatic mild-to-moderate COVID-19, and can shorten the length of their symptoms by up to 3 days. As well, limited evidence shows this may lead to fewer visits to their primary care providers and/or emergency departments.

The medication is inhaled through a Turbuhaler® (dry powder inhaler) device twice a day for 14 days.

"Although this treatment is not yet a standard of care, we have seen how it can lead to earlier symptom recovery," said Dr. Gordon Dow, Regional Infectious Diseases Medical Director, Horizon Health Network, and co-chair of Horizon's Infectious Disease / Medical Microbiology Advisory Group. "Think of this as similar to the discovery of acetaminophen, rather than the discovery of penicillin."

This is the first medication with robust data that has shown benefit for outpatients, and the first treatment recommended by the advisory group for this patient population. This treatment is only to be used for adult **outpatients; they must not require hospitalization or have signs of pneumonia.**

This medication is currently endorsed as an off-label treatment to be used on a case-by-case basis in British Columbia and the United Kingdom.

"I applaud the advisory group's work on this important COVID-19 treatment advice, and encourage physicians and nurse practitioners across the province to discuss this treatment option with their adult patients who are diagnosed with COVID-19," said Dr. Édouard Hendriks, Vice President Medical, Academic and Research Affairs.

If you fit the criteria, talk to your primary care provider to see if this medication is right for you.