

News Release

For immediate Release

MEDEC Urges Ontario Government to Reconsider Restricting Vitamin D Coverage in Ontario

(Toronto, September 29, 2010) On behalf of its Diagnostic Sector Committee, MEDEC the national association representing the Canadian medical device, diagnostic and technology industry, is urging the Ontario Government and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) to maintain comprehensive Vitamin D testing as an insured benefit under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP).

In a press release issued August 13, 2010, the Ontario government proposed to cover Vitamin D Testing as an insured service to Ontarians with the following conditions: Osteoporosis, Rickets, Osteopenia, Malabsorption Syndromes and Renal Disease, or Ontarians who are on medications that affect Vitamin D metabolism. MEDEC is pleased that the MOHLTC has invited public comment on [their August 13 proposal](#). However, the proposal implies that only when the disease condition is diagnosed will Vitamin D testing become an insured benefit. The patient would have to pay for the test in order to get a diagnosis.

MEDEC is requesting that the Ontario government extend the proposed coverage to include:

- Vitamin D testing that supports diagnoses and patient care, or that confirms a diagnosis in situations where a physician deems it necessary based on clinical judgment and knowledge about the patient;
- Vitamin D testing as part of early diagnosis of osteoporosis, rickets, osteopenia, malabsorption syndromes and renal disease, and coverage for these patients, once these conditions are diagnosed; and
- Provide a transparent process to add new disease coverage for Vitamin D testing as evidence becomes available

The limited coverage proposed by the Ontario government does not consider the value of Vitamin D in diagnosis and prevention of degenerative diseases currently overwhelming the Canadian health system nor does it allow for a mechanism for coverage as new evidence becomes available

The August 13 proposal, which is embodied in the *Health Insurance Act* and aligned with the *Excellent Care for All Act*, stands in opposition to the Ministry's goal of 'improving quality and value while promoting evidence-based health care'. We believe the proposal, if implemented unchanged, will cause a long term escalation in cost, and increased mortality and disease incidence.



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MEDEC asks that the Ontario government look beyond a focus on cost and embrace a more forward-looking, long-term policy to avert the negative disease outcomes which are possible as a result of low Vitamin D levels.

The Ontario government is urged to rethink its intention to limit Vitamin D testing so as to allow the diagnosis and prevention of multiple diseases that will save the health system millions of dollars in the long-run.

The complete MEDEC submission is available at <http://www.medec.org/en/content/reports-and-documents>.

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