Date: **November 1, 2021**
Memo To: All Island Health Staff and Physicians
From: Richard Jones, Director, Pharmacy Services
Infection Management Advisory Committee (IMAC)

RE: **remdesivir (VEKLURY) injection for COVID-19: Use and Access**

Situation: On November 10, 2020, the BC Remdesivir Review and Advisory Working Group (RRWAG) revised their recommendations regarding the use of remdesivir for the treatment of COVID-19. Select patients not enrolled in clinical trials may now be considered for receipt of remdesivir.

Allocations to health authorities are managed provincially. Island Health received its first allocation of remdesivir on November 20, 2020.

Background: Remdesivir received conditional approval by Health Canada for the treatment of COVID-19 based on the ACTT-1 trial. In the ACTT-1 trial (n=1062), remdesivir shortened time to clinical recovery, particularly in patients requiring supplemental oxygen who were not mechanically ventilated. There was no clear benefit on mortality or initiation of mechanical ventilation. Preliminary data from the SOLIDARITY trial (n=5451) showed remdesivir did not reduce in-hospital mortality or initiation of ventilation but the final report has not been published.

While enrollment in the Canadian Treatments for COVID-19 (CATCO) trial is recommended, some patients and clinicians may consider remdesivir therapy outside of this trial as it may decrease time to clinical recovery and hospital discharge.

Guidance:

There are two approaches to initiating remdesivir at this time:

1. **Option 1:** Offering CATCO enrollment at study sites to eligible patients
2. **Option 2:** If CATCO enrollment is declined or not appropriate, non-formulary use of remdesivir can be considered for use in adults and adolescents (aged 12 years or older with a body weight of at least 40 kg) with confirmed COVID-19 who meet the following criteria:
    - Requiring supplemental oxygen at the time of remdesivir initiation.
    - Not requiring non-invasive mechanical ventilation, invasive mechanical ventilation, or ECMO at the time of remdesivir
    - Have an eGFR greater than 30 mL/min and ALT less than 5 times the upper limit of normal.

Option 2 requires the approval of an Infectious Disease physician:

To contact an Infectious Disease physician to review baricitinib outside of the ICU, refer to the on-call schedule system: https://medicalaffairs.viha.ca/oncall/BrowseSchedules/. Under Infectious Diseases, select ID physician on call for either NRGH, RJH, or VGH Infectious Diseases. If there is no doctor listed for NRGH, please call the RJH contact covering.

Note: remdesivir will be mixed in Pharmacy for both trial and non-trial use

Information Sheet: remdesivir injection

Online COVID Resources:

COVID 19 Main Page
Medication Related Guidance and Recommendations