MEMORANDUM

TO:  Medical Officers of Health, Associate Medical Officers of Health

RE: Rifampin 150mg & 300mg drug shortage

We would like to take the opportunity to provide an update regarding the ongoing national shortage of rifampin 150mg and 300mg capsules, indicated for the treatment of active tuberculosis (TB) and latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI).

The Ministry of Health (‘the ministry’) has been informed the shortage will likely extend into September 2019. To augment this shortage, the ministry has procured minimal additional units of rifampin from Sanofi Canada; however, this product has an expiry date of October 31, 2019. Every shipment of this product will include a letter requesting that this product be used prior to others with a longer expiry date.

To manage supply during this shortage, the ministry will be monitoring inventory across the province and reviewing every order submitted based on active and LTBI cases currently being treated. We may also contact your board of health to re-distribute available products around the province to meet treatment demand if required.

The ministry requests the following from Boards of Health:
- Be judicious in ordering of rifampin and do not stockpile;
- Prioritize treatment for those with active TB and those who have already initiated treatment of LTBI with rifampin;
- Submit requests for rifampin to IDPP@ontario.ca for review and approval (requisition form attached) before placing your order in Panorama;
- Please notify health care practitioners in your area of the TB drug shortage and share a copy of this memo, if appropriate; and
- Utilize the short-dated product first before other rifampin products that have longer shelf expiry dates.

The ministry is working with Public Health Ontario (PHO) to provide further considerations regarding LTBI treatment. These considerations will be shared when available.

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The ministry continues to collaborate with federal, provincial and territorial partners to raise this issue with Health Canada and develop alternate mechanisms for purchasing outside of Canada.

As more information becomes available regarding drug availability, updates will be provided to your TB program managers. Should you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact IDPP@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

David C. Williams, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health

c: Brian Schwartz, Vice President, Public Health Science, Public Health Ontario

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