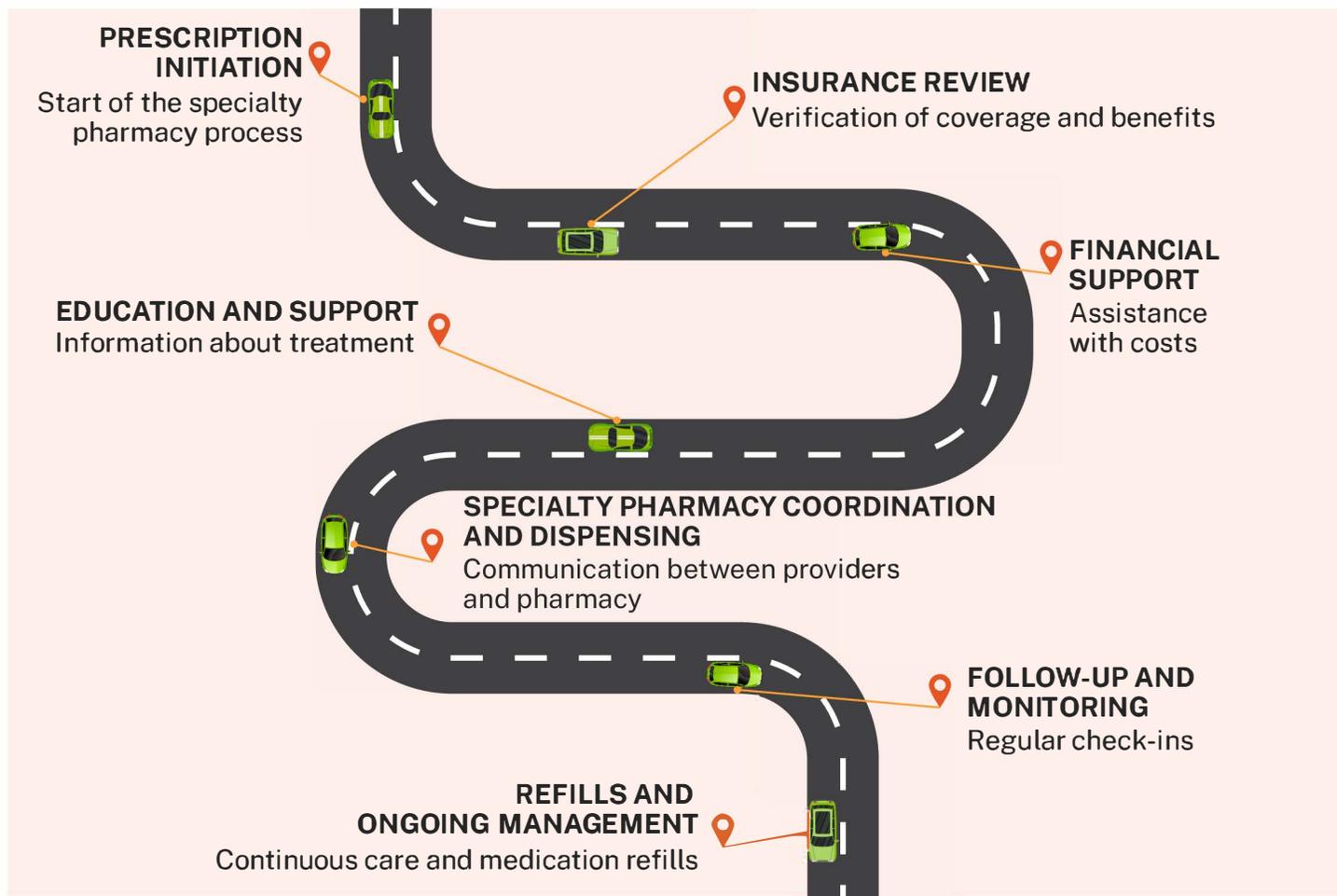


PATIENT ROADMAP FOR ORAL ONCOLOGICS

Oral anticancer medications are typically dispensed from specialty pharmacies and go through different processes compared to medications used to treat more common problems like diabetes or high blood pressure. This handout highlights some of the common steps that must occur from the time your doctor decides to start a new oral cancer therapy to the time you start taking it at home.



1. Prescription Initiation

- The process starts when your oncologist prescribes your oral anticancer treatment and sends the order to a specialty pharmacy.
- Specialty pharmacies can order and fill high-cost medications that may not be readily available at local pharmacies.

2. Insurance Review

- Your prescription and treatment plan will be reviewed by your insurance, called prior authorization, to ensure the medication is being used correctly.
- Your insurance may require additional information from your doctor's office. This can take anywhere from 3 to 7 days.
- If you haven't heard from your specialty pharmacy or doctor's office within one week, it may be helpful to reach out to the office for an update.
- Sometimes, a prior authorization may be denied, and your doctor will need to submit an appeal to your insurance providing additional information on why this medication is being prescribed for you.
- If an appeal is needed, it may delay when you receive your medication. If you are notified that your prescription has been denied, it is best to contact your doctor's office to discuss the next steps for your care.

3. Financial Support

- Oral anticancer medications can be very expensive, even when insurance approves the medication.
- Programs exist to help patients pay for their medication, such as co-pay cards, patient assistance programs, and grant funding. Reach out to your doctor, clinical pharmacist, or specialty pharmacy for more information.
- If you receive forms to complete, it is important to do so as soon as possible to prevent delays in receiving your medication.

4. Education and Support

- Before the medication is dispensed, you should receive education on your new medicine from a pharmacist or other healthcare provider.
- This includes information about the medication, potential side effects, proper administration, storage, and the importance of taking your medication as prescribed.
- Support services may also be offered, such as contact information for ongoing questions and concerns.

5. Specialty Pharmacy Coordination and Dispensing

- Your cancer center may have its own specialty pharmacy or your insurance may require you to fill with their preferred specialty pharmacy.
- Many specialty pharmacies often mail medications to your home. It's important to answer their calls and check voicemails, as the phone number or area code may be unfamiliar.
- Before shipping, the specialty pharmacy will confirm your address, verify ongoing treatment, and ask any other important questions. If you receive financial assistance, confirm that the pharmacy has this information each time you schedule a delivery.
- Your medication may require special packaging to keep it safe during shipping. When the medication arrives, make sure to verify storage instructions on the medication label.

6. Follow-Up and Monitoring

- Once you receive the medication, remember to follow up with your cancer care team to manage potential side effects from the treatment and make changes if necessary.
- You may need to get labs drawn or have an office visit with the team. This ongoing support is vital to ensure safe and effective use of your oral anticancer medication.

7. Refills and Ongoing Management

- The specialty pharmacy can help with refilling your oral anticancer medications. It is important for you to contact your specialty pharmacy within 5 to 7 days of your next refill to make sure you don't miss any doses of the medication.
- The pharmacy may need a few days to process and mail your refills. They might contact your healthcare provider to confirm the correct dose and schedule for your oral anticancer medication.
- Insurance reviews, prior authorizations, and financial assistance documents may need to be completed again, so it is important to remain in contact with your specialty pharmacy and healthcare provider.

Summary

The journey of an oral anticancer medication is a complex process that requires the teamwork of healthcare providers, pharmacists, and patients. Each step is critical to make sure that you receive your medications safely. By understanding this pathway, everyone can work together to manage your care and improve the overall healthcare experience. Advocating for yourself takes time and effort, but it really does help make sure you have your medications when you need them!