

# MAKING ORTHOTIC OFFLOADING DEVICES ACCESSIBLE for people with diabetic foot conditions

A collaboration between BC PharmaCare and health authority professionals

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## Aim

To develop a Ministry of Health/health authority program that ensures access to offloading devices for people recovering from a diabetic foot ulcer (DFU) or other diabetic foot (DF) conditions.

## Method

**2019:** B.C. requests two studies on the use of DFU offloading devices:

- Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technology in Health (CADTH) review
- Health technology assessment (HTA)

The studies highlight that:

- Offloading devices are effective
- Patients face financial barriers to obtain a device

**June 2022:** PharmaCare partners with the provincial total contact cast (TCC) working group (nurses specialized in wound ostomy continence, occupational therapists, a physiotherapist and an orthopedic surgeon) to provide full-service treatment and post-treatment maintenance care for people with a DFU or DF conditions.

Decision made to develop the program in steps.

## Results

**January 2023:** Step 1 of the program launches. PharmaCare covers offloading devices for patients who have a DFU successfully closed with TCC.

Patients must be referred to a PharmaCare-enrolled orthotist by the health authority outpatient/community clinic that is providing the wound care treatment. The orthotist applies for coverage of the offloading device.

The referral form, a list of currently approved clinics and orthotists, plus information for patients is available on the [PharmaCare website](#).

**Early 2024 (projected):** Evaluation of step 1 of the program.

## Case study

A 56-year-old presents to clinic with a DFU. They begin TCC. Once the DFU is closed, the patient visits an orthotics provider for an offloading device and footwear.



March 22



April 3



April 11



May 29



June



June

## Conclusion

Through successful partnership, PharmaCare and the TCC working group have made the first step towards a program to treat and manage DF conditions through effective treatment of the wound, followed by an appropriate offloading device. Local, regional and provincial/ territorial processes need to designate human, material and financial resources to support the program.

*“Offloading is of paramount importance. Inappropriate pressure must be modified or removed.” — Wounds Canada, 2021*

## References

Botros M, Kuhnke J, Embil J, Goettl K, Morin C, Parsons L, et al. Best practice recommendations for the prevention and management of diabetic foot ulcers. In Foundations of Best Practice for Skin and Wound Management. A supplement of Wound Care Canada; 2017. 68 pp. Retrieved from: [www.woundscanada.ca/docman/public/health-care-professional/bpr-workshop/895-wc-bpr-prevention-and-management-of-diabetic-foot-ulcers-1573r1e-final/file](http://www.woundscanada.ca/docman/public/health-care-professional/bpr-workshop/895-wc-bpr-prevention-and-management-of-diabetic-foot-ulcers-1573r1e-final/file)