PEI PharmaCheck program

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—Erin MacKenzie,
Executive Director,
PEIPA

Pharmacists in Prince Edward Island have begun delivering their first government-funded professional service—a medication review program called PEI PharmaCheck.

The program is the first developed and funded under the Pharmacy Services Agreement that the province and the Prince Edward Island Pharmacists Association (PEIPA) signed in July 2012. The association is confident that the list of reimbursed pharmacy services will be expanding in the coming months.

“Not that long ago, the government was telling us they had no interest in looking at reimbursement for professional services,” says Erin MacKenzie, executive director of PEIPA. “Certainly, that has come full circle and we are very excited about this ground-breaking move in PEI. We see it as a huge opportunity.”

The PEI PharmaCheck program was developed in collaboration with the Canadian Pharmacists Association, says Ms. MacKenzie. It took effect in the province on April 1, 2013.

One component is a basic medication review with up to 4 follow-ups per year. Eligible patients are Islanders taking 3 or more chronic prescriptions that are part of the Seniors’ Drug Cost Assistance program, the Financial Assistance Program or the Private Nursing Home Program.

The program also includes a diabetes-specific medication review with up to 4 follow-ups per

year for patients taking at least 1 prescription medication covered for diabetes under PEI Pharmacare for diabetes and who are enrolled in the province’s Diabetes Program.

Pharmacists receive \$52.50 for each basic medication review and \$20 per follow-up. The reimbursement is \$65 for each diabetes-specific review and \$25 for each follow-up.

“The program is already providing significant benefits to Island residents who have qualified,” adds Ms. MacKenzie. “The early uptake of the service has been beyond what we had expected—based on reports from other jurisdictions.”

Data collected between April 1 and May 7 showed a total of 1312 medication reviews were done under the various program components.

The association anticipates more progress in professional service development in the fall of 2013. That is when the provincial legislature is expected to deal with a new Health Services Act and proposed regulations to expand pharmacists’ scope of practice. The Prince Edward Island Pharmacy Board has proposed authority for a number of additional services, including immunizations and prescribing for minor ailments.

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Physicians and pharmacists call for more rapid implementation of e-prescribing in Canada

Canada should aim to have all prescriptions in the country created, signed and transmitted electronically by 2015, according to a joint statement released by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) on May 21, 2013.

The statement acknowledges that achieving this vision poses challenges, but says efforts must be made because of the extensive potential benefits to patients, providers and the health care system. These benefits will be realized when e-prescribing is integrated with Drug Information Systems (DIS) currently in place or

being developed in various jurisdictions, say the 2 associations.

The CMA and CPhA have laid out a 5-point plan for achieving full e-prescribing functionality by 2015. It includes the need for the provinces and Canada Health Infoway to complete electronic connectivity requirements among points of care, and for provinces, territories and regulatory bodies to develop regulatory frameworks to facilitate and govern clinicians’ use of electronic prescribing.

The full e-prescribing joint statement is available at www.pharmacists.ca and www.cma.ca.

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