Cross-Canada Updates

Stronger together

Canada's pharmacy associations work together on key, critical issues affecting the profession in support of strong associations, exceptional pharmacists and healthy Canadians. This new *CPJ* feature highlights some of the advancements being made at pharmacy associations across the country.

British Columbia Pharmacy Association (BCPhA) | bcpharmacy.ca

The BCPhA's annual conference will be held May 10 to 11, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency Vancouver in downtown Vancouver. The conference features keynote speakers, panel discussions and clinical sessions that help pharmacists further develop their knowledge and careers. Evening celebrations provide continued networking opportunities with some of the top decision makers. To learn more and be first to know when registration opens, visit <https://www.bcpharmacy.ca/conference>.

Alberta Pharmacists' Association (RxA) | rxa.ca

Drugs that are not disposed of properly can become an environmental hazard, or may end up in the wrong hands, potentially leading to abuse. RxA offers a province-wide drug disposal program known as ENVIRx, which encourages Albertans to return any expired or unused medicines to their pharmacist. Bringing unused medications to the pharmacy presents an opportunity to connect with the pharmacist and talk about medications that haven't worked or a situation that has changed. It allows pharmacists to educate patients on proper drug use and disposal. The return of unused opioids and painkillers can help prevent opioid abuse and keep the public safe by removing these unused medications from our communities. The program protects public health and the environment by keeping medications out of waterways and landfills.

Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan (PAS) | skpharmacists.ca

PAS worked through summer and early fall to complete provincial contract negotiations and has been providing input on the new framework for travel vaccinations provided by pharmacies in Saskatchewan. PAS, like other pharmacy organizations, will continue to monitor and provide feedback on the federal pharmacare initiative and other important advocacy priorities. We continue to provide support for members on the influenza season and work on significant updates related to the PACT (tobacco cessation) program. PAS is looking forward to December's annual joint meeting with the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals and the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists – Saskatchewan Branch. Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season!

Pharmacists Manitoba | pharmacistsmb.ca

The Manitoba Government recently implemented a cabinet shuffle in which Cameron Friesen was appointed the new Health Minister; we look forward to building a positive relationship with him. In August we attended a press conference, where the Manitoba Government announced a 5-year renewal of their partnership with the Manitoba Medication Return Program. Pharmacists Manitoba CEO, Brenna Shearer, spoke at the event encouraging Manitobans to dispose of unwanted medication by returning it to their local pharmacy. In September we hosted an outreach reception for pharmacists in the Westman region of the province to show them what we have been doing to advocate on their behalf. We also participated in the White Coat Ceremony at the University of Manitoba in October.

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 DOI:10.1177/1715163518804770

Ontario Pharmacists Association (OPA) | opatoday.com

There is growing awareness that pharmacists are underutilized when it comes to chronic disease management. According to Statistics Canada, 8.6% of the population (aged 12 and over) have been diagnosed with asthma, but there is little research available on the role that community pharmacists can have in managing it. OPA partnered with Ryerson University to design and implement a project to evaluate the effect of a pharmacist-led asthma management service. The results of this study demonstrate a high degree of patient satisfaction with the asthma management service and a high level of pharmacist willingness to deliver it. Additionally, medication adherence increased in both intervention and control group patients; and asthma general knowledge increased in the intervention group. For references and more information, visit <https://www.opatoday.com>.

Association québécoise des pharmaciens propriétaires (AQPP) | aqpp.qc.ca

In order to document the impact of community pharmacists' consultations with patients, the AQPP commissioned an independent study conducted jointly by researchers from CIRANO, CRCHUM and HEC Montréal. In addition to highlighting the role of community pharmacists in first-line patient triage, the study allows AQPP to conservatively estimate that the advice provided by its members represents, in Quebec, a value of nearly \$500 million per year for the health care system and for Quebec patients. This is a substantial sum. In addition, the study found that, for nearly 80% of patients who had used a consultation with their pharmacist, the pharmacy visit was the first option.

New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association (NBPA) | nbpharma.ca

The New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association engaged in an advocacy campaign in the lead-up to the September provincial election. Executive Director Paul Blanchard and NB pharmacists met with about 50 candidates from across the province. The Association also developed an election document entitled *Prescription for Progress* that outlines the top issues for NB pharmacists, including the need for funding for pharmacy services. Part of the efforts included the development of social media videos on the need for funding for the treatment of UTIs, the need for a medication environmental stewardship program and the need to address the large gap in the funding of services between NB and other provinces.

Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia (PANS) | pans.ns.ca

Although the enrollment period has passed for the PANS Community Pharmacist-led Anticoagulation Management Service (CPAMS) Demonstration Project, we reached an agreement with the Nova Scotia's Department of Health and Wellness to offer the service to patients who have either lost, or do not otherwise have, a family physician. Additionally, we have obtained bridge funding for those already enrolled in the program so they can continue receiving this valuable service until at least September 2019 (the expiration date of the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Tariff Agreement). This is just one way in which pharmacy is helping to fill in gaps in the health care system in this province. We continue to work with government to find other areas in which pharmacies can help.

Prince Edward Island Pharmacists Association (PEIPhA) | peipharm.info

PEIPhA represents the voice of PEI pharmacists and technicians on important issues affecting both the public and the profession at the provincial and national levels. Recently we consulted on the new *Prince Edward Island Action Plan to Prevent and Mitigate Opioid Overdoses and Deaths* and the *Canadian Public Health Report on Cannabis*. This fall our Executive Director participated in the National Pharmacare Consultation, conducted by the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare. The purpose of this Council is to assess options and provide independent advice to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance on how best to implement national pharmacare in a manner that is affordable for Canadians, employers and governments. It is crucial that the voice of pharmacists is heard in these important discussions.

Pharmacists' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL) | panl.net

In September, PANL delivered its 2018 Annual Conference in St. John's, NL. With a theme of *Engage. Educate. Evolve.*, this year's conference once again provided delegates with unprecedented access to networking opportunities, and a comprehensive slate of continuing education sessions focused on the ever-evolving nature of pharmacy practice. The conference's awards gala celebrated the profession of pharmacy and recognized individual pharmacists for their achievements and service. This year's Community Pharmacist of the Year was Luke Agada of Shoppers Drug Mart, Grand Falls-Windsor, and the Hospital Pharmacist of the Year was Michael Welsh, Western Health. Brenda Bursey, Shoppers Drug Mart, LeMarchant Road, St. John's, was honoured with the Pfizer Bowl of Hygeia for her tremendous contributions to the profession and the community.

Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada (AFPC) | afpc.info

AFPC is the national voice for academic pharmacy, providing leadership and resources for faculty members across Canada. The 10 universities are graduating over 1300 new pharmacists each year. A key initiative is AFPC's Informatics for Pharmacy Students e-Resource. This 17-chapter online course is funded by Canada Health Infoway. In collaboration with nursing and medical faculties, AFPC has developed interprofessional chapters on e-medication reconciliation and e-prescribing. The e-prescribing chapter highlights Infoway's PrescribeIT initiative and how digital health solutions can help address the opioid crisis. As the course is open access, practising pharmacists would also find the chapters to be valuable continuing education resources (<https://www.afpc-education.info>).

Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) | pharmacists.ca

Two significant shortages and recalls have recently forced pharmacies to quickly respond to and manage changes in supply as well as considerable patient anxiety and frustration. While these were large-scale and high-profile events, pharmacists know that shortages are part of daily reality and that they are getting more frequent. CPhA maintained regular contact with Health Canada and other stakeholders to provide a pharmacist perspective throughout the shortages. We are currently advocating for a new strategy that will help prevent drug shortages and mitigate their impact on providers and patients. Additionally, ensuring patients have safe access to medical cannabis remained a priority for CPhA in the lead-up to the legalization of cannabis. We have continued to advocate for pharmacist dispensing and management and have developed a range of education and tools to help you support your patients. Visit <https://www.pharmacists.ca/cannabis> for more.