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 *CPJ* feature highlights some of the work happening at pharmacy associations across the country. To complement this issue's special section on pharmacists as immunizers, many of our Organizational Members have focused on immunization initiatives.

Spotlight On: Immunization

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

This fall, Association québécoise des pharmaciens propriétaires (AQPP) will intervene during the special consultations on Bill 31. The bill, introduced in June at the National Assembly of Quebec by Danielle McCann, Minister of Health and Social Services, proposes amendments to the pharmacist's scope of practice. Of particular note, the bill proposes that pharmacists in Quebec be granted the authority to prescribe and administer vaccines and, in emergency situations, certain other medications. Quebec is currently the only province that does not allow pharmacists to administer vaccines and the bill will remedy this situation. The minister hopes that this bill will increase coverage for influenza in the province.

British Columbia Pharmacy Association (BCPhA) | bcpharmacy.ca

In the first 7 months of 2019, BC reported 31 confirmed cases of measles, prompting government to launch a measles immunization catch-up program for children from kindergarten to grade 12. BC's cases alone represented approximately 40% of all cases of measles reported in Canada during that time. As part of efforts to immunize youth, pharmacists administered 1220 doses of measles-containing vaccine to BC children and youth this year. Following a major flu outbreak in 2009, BC pharmacists were given authority to provide immunizations by injection. As of July 2019, more than 4200 pharmacists in BC have been trained and have received authority to administer injections. Publicly funded vaccines in BC include flu, measles, mumps and rubella, varicella, human papillomavirus (HPV), tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, meningococcal disease and pneumonia. BC pharmacists can also immunize for shingles and other recommended, but not publicly funded, vaccines.

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

The New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association (NBPA) continues its efforts to support Bill 39, An Act Respecting Proof of Immunization. The NBPA appeared before the New Brunswick legislature's Law Amendments Committee to provide some factual information about the science behind vaccines. The NBPA also commissioned a survey that found that 88% of NB residents support the proposed requirement that all students attending public schools and children in licensed early learning and child care facilities provide proof of immunizations unless they have a medical exemption. New Brunswick pharmacists have been administering vaccines under the Pharmacy Act for more than 10 years. While they do not have the authority to vaccinate children under 5 years of age, pharmacists could play a small but important role in any "catch-up" program that the Department of Education may consider to vaccinate the 20% to 25% of students who do not have their shots up to date.

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DOI:10.1177/1715163519880474

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

Despite the year over year and outstanding success of pharmacists providing the publicly funded flu shot in Nova Scotia, immunization rates in the province are still below target. With this in mind, Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia (PANS) has worked with pharmacies in 3 regions in the province to provide family flu vaccine clinics at public schools outside school hours (available to students, parents, school staff and their families). Additionally, PANS continues to advocate with Nova Scotia's Public Health officials for the provision of other publicly funded vaccines through the pharmacy network. Given that adult immunization rates in Nova Scotia for all publicly vaccines are well below national targets, it is the goal of the association to have government add pharmacists as providers of all publicly funded vaccines.

Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan (PAS) | skpharmacists.ca

Pharmacists in Saskatchewan became a part of the immunization community when we began providing publicly funded influenza and other privately purchased vaccines in 2015. Just this fall, Saskatchewan pharmacists received prescribing authority for vaccine-preventable diseases ranging from domestic through to those encountered during travel. The new prescribing authority is dependent on the various levels of training and competencies of Saskatchewan pharmacists. Pharmacists, once again, have a greater role in increasing access to immunizations and contributing to the overall immunization status of residents in our communities. The newly expanded scope allows pharmacists to be more active members of the health care team, growing access to preventative health care in Saskatchewan.

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

Pharmacists in PEI have had the authority to prescribe and administer certain vaccines since 2014. While this service has been well received, pharmacists felt that being able to administer some travel vaccines and having to refuse others was illogical and inconvenient for patients. In response, Prince Edward Island Pharmacists Association (PEIPhA) advocated for additional vaccines to be added to the allowable list, and in July 2019, 6 additional travel vaccines were added. Dependent on completion of an approved travel vaccine education program, PEI pharmacists can now administer vaccines for European tick-borne encephalitis, Japanese encephalitis, traveller's diarrhea, typhoid and yellow fever. They can also administer the rabies vaccine (preexposure only). Pharmacists have been established as the "provider of choice" for influenza vaccination, providing approximately 70% of flu shots in the province.

Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) | pharmacists.ca

As the most accessible health care provider, pharmacists are ideally positioned to provide injections and vaccinations to their patients. The Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) has been actively promoting the role of pharmacists as immunizers for many years, and we are pleased that pharmacists now have the authority to administer injections and vaccinations in almost all jurisdictions across Canada. The Rethink Pharmacists website at www.rethinkpharmacists.ca provides a countrywide overview of pharmacists' abilities to provide these services and more and can be shared with your patients to help them better understand some of the things you can do for them. CPhA was also pleased to contribute to the special section on Pharmacists As Immunizers in this issue of *CPJ*, by accrediting the clinical articles to allow you to earn continuing education units.

Other Highlights

Alberta Pharmacists' Association (RxA) | rxa.ca

To support Alberta Pharmacists' Association's (RxA's) ongoing advocacy efforts, the concept of RxA's Leadership Cohort was developed. RxA's Leadership Cohort is a group of pharmacist leaders created to increase patient, public and other stakeholder understanding of the value of the profession with a goal of ensuring its viability. The Leadership Cohort is responsible for building relationships, opportunities and leadership networks to champion the role of pharmacists as valued members of the health care system. In addition, it is expected that the Leadership Cohort will assist pharmacists in fully understanding, implementing and practising under the Ministerial Order, the Pharmacy Holdback Policy and the Pharmacy Services Framework, as well as provide feedback to RxA on best practices and impact of the adopted measures. Over 160 cohort members have had over 50 meetings with provincial election candidates and sitting MLAs and continue to meet with MLAs on a regular basis. They continue to meet with members of Parliament, stakeholders and pharmacists in their areas.

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

The Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada (AFPC) is the national voice for academic pharmacy. In 2019, AFPC celebrated 75 years of providing leadership, advocacy and resources for faculty members across Canada. The 10 universities are graduating over 1300 new pharmacists each year—all faculties have moved or are in transition to the PharmD program as the entry-level degree. AFPC's annual conference is the premier event for pharmacy educators and researchers to network, learn and share. CPERC 2020 will be May 21-23, 2020, at the Hotel Omni Mont-Royal, Montreal—cohosted by Université de Montréal and Université Laval. The Call for Abstracts is now open—check out the program for the 88 abstracts for mini-sessions and research posters presented at CPERC 2019 at www.afpc.info/content/conference-overview.

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

Advocacy will remain a top priority for the Pharmacists' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL) as we move into 2020. One of our key focuses this year will be advocating for government funding for minor ailments. With our provincial physicians citing unmanageable workloads, residents experiencing overcrowding in emergency rooms and inability to even secure a family doctor and a strained health care system in general, pharmacists can play a larger role in delivering front-line health care services to patients.

Pharmacists Manitoba | pharmacistsmb.ca

On August 25, 2019, during the Provincial Election campaign, the Progressive Conservatives (PCs) hosted an election announcement committing to fund pharmacists for prescribing medication for women with urinary tract infections. This was the first time that a political party committed to pharmacy services in Manitoba. The Manitoba Provincial Election was held on September 10, 2019, with the PCs winning 36 seats, giving them a majority government. This is the first clear commitment by the elected government to deliver better health care outcomes, alleviate wait times and congestion and save taxpayer dollars. Pharmacists Manitoba is looking forward to working with the provincial government and are hopeful of making progress in the coming months on other pharmacy services.