

Customer Case Study

Hamilton Health Sciences

“e-Therapeutics⁺ has put us on the road to a truly centralized reference for all our health care practitioners. Our ability to provide our patients with the most current, Canadian information is of the utmost importance to us. e-Therapeutics⁺ helps us achieve that goal.”

*-- Suzanne Jackson, Drug Information Pharmacist
Hamilton Health Sciences*

Customer Profile

- Hamilton Health Sciences
- Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- Five unique hospitals and a cancer centre
- 10,000 employees

Why e-Therapeutics⁺?

- Need for a centralized, electronic resource accessible by all health care practitioners
- Desire for a trusted Canadian source of information
- Requirement for intuitive, easy-to-use resources to help practitioners make evidence-based drug and therapeutic decisions

Benefits of e-Therapeutics⁺

- Centralized access to a common source of information decreases potential confusion and puts all practitioners on the same page
- Canadian content ensures relevant information for Canadian practitioners
- Patient safety is improved

Situation

Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) is a large, multi-practitioner health centre in Southern Ontario. Patient safety is a major corporate directive and budget is allocated annually to improve the database of electronic resources used by HHS employees to support this mandate. Advances in electronic resources have fuelled a drive to replace print resources with electronic and reduce the administrative burden of tracking and updating multiple print copies. There is also a desire to reduce the sheer number of references used, so quality of source is assured and practitioners all refer to the same material. One noted concern is the continued use of American resources, which often leads to mismatching of drug names and profiles, as well as questions of Canadian availability.

Solution

In 2005, HHS subscribed to e-CPS to reduce the number of print copies of the *Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS)* in circulation. Early in 2007, the e-CPS licenses were upgraded to e-Therapeutics⁺ to create a centralized resource for the much needed Canadian information used in day-to-day decision making. For Hamilton Health Sciences, e-Therapeutics⁺ helps fulfill the corporation's patient safety mandate by supplying appropriate names and terminology for the Canadian health care system. The speedy availability of Health Canada advisories, warnings and product recall information reduces the need to search out this information and eliminates concerns that practitioners are missing critical safety updates.

Results

Suzanne Jackson, Drug Information Pharmacist with HHS, has become the “go-to” expert for HHS practitioners needing assistance finding drug information. She feels that the budget to upgrade to e-Therapeutics⁺ could be justified on the basis of its Canadian content alone. She adds that timely access to Health Canada advisories is impressive and that the availability of this Canadian information instead of FDA warnings resolves “a definite safety issue,” fitting perfectly with the Centre's patient safety mandate. “It shows that we're all on the same page and on top of the latest information,” says Suzanne.

Suzanne is confident that e-Therapeutics⁺ is being adopted by the Centre's practitioners for one main reason—she hasn't received many calls. This, she says, is a good thing, because fewer calls to her means the resource is easy to use and easy to learn. She also noted, with a laugh, that she always hears the complaints about a product, but seldom hears the accolades. “Because I'm not hearing anything, I think people like it,” Suzanne notes. “You usually hear the bad things.”

Suzanne hopes to see those who have been referencing American resources transition to e-Therapeutics⁺ as reliance on American information sometimes results in “ordering products that have US-based guidelines or US-based generic names that might not match Canadian realities.” There is also the possibility of choosing products that haven't been on the Canadian market for very long, or aren't available in the Canadian market at all. “We've run into situations where a product has come off the US market, but is still available, and appropriate, for use in Canada. That's where having the Canadian information is a huge benefit.”

An unanticipated benefit of e-Therapeutics⁺ has been the practicality of having access to product images. Suzanne noted the ease with which a shift from a nebulized to injected epinephrine was communicated to staff. “Safety was a huge concern because the dosage is vastly different between nebulized and injected, though they look very similar,” she explains. “A picture you can send electronically along with your own information makes it easier to communicate the issues to people who might not be seeing it on a day-to-day basis.”



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