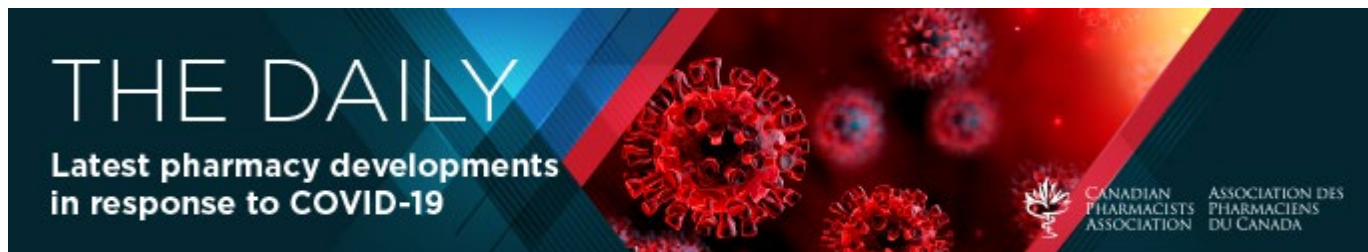


From: Public & Professional Affairs Department
Sent: March 19, 2020 5:04 PM
Subject: The Daily: CPhA's COVID-19 Update for March 19



March 19, 2020

CPhA

CPhA releases Guidelines for Protecting the Front Lines: COVID-19 Day-to-Day Questions

CPhA has created an [FAQs page to help pharmacists manage day-to-day questions about COVID-19](#) in their pharmacies. This is a national living document meant to support policy, practice and clinical guidelines being developed across the country, and will answer key questions pharmacists may have when supporting their patients during the pandemic. The content will be updated regularly. A French page will also be provided.

Upcoming webinar: Managing COVID-19 Day-to-Day: More Answers to Pharmacists' FAQs

CPhA will be hosting a free webinar on Monday March 23 at 1:00 pm EDT to answer pharmacists' latest questions on how to manage the day-to-day challenges of providing patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Registration will open tomorrow.

CPhA's COVID-19 web pages are being updated regularly at www.pharmacists.ca/covid19 and www.pharmacists.ca/covid19fr.

National

Health Canada releases guidance on exemptions for prescriptions of controlled substances under the CDSA and its Regulations

Health Canada has issued exemptions for prescriptions of controlled substances under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) and its Regulations. If permitted within the applicable provincial/territorial scopes of practice, the exemptions permit pharmacists to extend prescriptions; permit pharmacists to transfer prescriptions to other pharmacists; permit prescribers to issue verbal orders (i.e., over the phone) to extend or refill a prescription; and permit pharmacy employees to deliver prescriptions of controlled substances to patients' homes or other locations where they may be (i.e., self isolating). Health Canada is strongly encouraging all partners to work to implement these exemptions in their jurisdictions. It is also urging Ministries and regulators to conduct an assessment of any barriers to access to medicines that could contravene public health advice for social distancing and self-isolation, when appropriate. These could include, for example, temporarily lifting restrictions on take-home doses ("carries") of opioid agonist treatments, and allowing those with chronic conditions to obtain enough medication to last through a period of self-isolation. View the exemptions in [English](#) or [French](#).

Health Canada waiving usual regulatory requirements to increase supply of sanitizers, PPE

In light of the unprecedented demand and urgent need for products that can help limit the spread of COVID-19, including hand sanitizers, disinfectants and personal protective equipment (such as masks and gowns) as well as swabs, Health Canada is [facilitating access to products](#) that may not fully meet current regulatory requirements, as an interim measure.

Health Canada expedites access to COVID-19 diagnostic laboratory test kits and other medical devices

An Interim Order has been signed to [allow expedited access](#) to COVID-19-related medical devices for use by health care

providers, including diagnostic test kits. With the Interim Order, two new diagnostic tests are made readily accessible in Canada:

- the Roche Molecular Systems Inc. cobas SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic device; and
- the ThermoFisher Scientific TaqPath™ COVID-19 Combo Kit.

This Interim Order may also help ensure Canadian access to other marketed COVID-19-related medical devices used to treat, mitigate or prevent COVID-19, as necessary. Existing devices, where the approved, intended use was not originally COVID-19-related, could also be expanded under this Interim Order.

Whole Health offers resources for pharmacists

To help answer some of the most common questions and concerns being expressed by community pharmacists during the current pandemic, the leadership at Whole Health Pharmacy Partners has produced a series of practical resources and is making them available to all pharmacists. The resources include FAQs on COVID-19 procedures for pharmacy, [FAQ on likely COVID-19 questions from patients](#) in pharmacy, and screening signage that can be used in community pharmacies to pre-screen patients (with adaptations specific to [Alberta/BC](#) and [Ontario](#)).

CSHP's COVID-19 PSN open access for all pharmacists

In an effort to share information and best hospital pharmacy practices regarding COVID-19, the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists has created a COVID-19 Pharmacy Specialty Network (PSN). The PSN is open access for pharmacists in all provinces and can be joined at www.QID.io.

Provincial

Pharmacists to assess Albertans for COVID-19, manage drug supply

Pharmacists have been working hard to help Albertans assess and screen for COVID-19. A [new billing code](#) has been created for this service. The service is initially limited to screening and the provision of information about COVID-19. Alberta Health and the Alberta Pharmacists' Association will remain in close collaboration on how to expand this role, should this be needed. This could include direct referral for COVID-19 testing and supporting Health Link 811 in addressing Albertans' information needs. The Alberta government is [also recommending](#) that pharmacies have the discretion to provide a maximum 30-day supply of prescription drugs. To assist with the added cost, those with Alberta government-sponsored Coverage for Seniors and Non-Group coverage programs will pay a lower co-payment of up to \$8 per prescription for a 30-day supply. The current co-payment is up to \$25 per prescription. Albertans with other coverage should consult with their benefits provider.

Alberta College of Pharmacy releases new guidance document

The Alberta College of Pharmacy has released a new [guidance document](#) for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance includes information about two temporary authorizations for pharmacists:

- Alberta pharmacists now have temporary authorization to waive requirements that a pharmacist see a patient personally to assess and prescribe.
- Alberta pharmacists also have temporary authorization to waive the requirement to notify other regulated health professionals whose care of the patient may be affected by their prescribing decision, when adapting prescriptions for the purpose of renewing a prescription to ensure continuity of care. However, there are limits to the leniency — pharmacists still have to notify the respective health care professional about dose changes, therapeutic substitutions, prescribing in an emergency and initial access prescribing or prescribing to manage ongoing care.

Doctors and pharmacists in Nova Scotia have new options for virtual care

Effective immediately, doctors and pharmacists in Nova Scotia have [new options for virtual care](#), including using telephone and secure videoconferencing. Pharmacists can also renew prescriptions for most medications and the provincial government will cover the assessment fee.

Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists direction on 30-days supply and amendments to support pharmacist prescribing during COVID-19

The Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists has [taken measures](#) to support ongoing patient access to medication during the COVID-19 pandemic. It issued new directives stating that a 30-days supply of medication is to be provided unless in the pharmacist's professional judgment a longer day supply is appropriate. Prescribing standards have been amended to allow pharmacists to prescribe in a public health emergency/crisis. The amendments also include:

- Removing the necessity to use a private consultation room and enabling use of pharmacist professional judgment to adhere to infection control while maximizing confidentiality.
- Removing necessity to notify a patient's primary care provider or specialist when prescribing.
- Enabling pharmacists to prescribe for patients when their home pharmacy is closed.
- Authorizing pharmacists to prescribe CDSA drugs when they do so in accordance with an NSCP Emergency Protocol. The NSCP is continuing to work with stakeholders on this Emergency Protocol as it awaits further details from Health Canada on their provisions to enable pharmacists under the CDSA. *****The NSCP will communicate when pharmacists are able to prescribe CDSA drugs.**

International

WHO updates advice on ibuprofen

The World Health Organization has updated its advice on its [official Twitter account](#): "Based on currently available information, WHO does not recommend against the use of ibuprofen. We are also consulting with physicians treating COVID-19 patients and are not aware of reports of any negative effects of ibuprofen, beyond the usual known side effects that limit its use in certain populations." This stance, along with others released by the [European Medicines Agency](#) and, most recently, the [International Pharmaceutical Federation \(FIP\)](#), supports [CPhA's guidance document](#) released on March 17, 2020. FIP's statement also includes its position that there is no evidence to support the assertion that treatment with ACE inhibitors or ARBs could predispose individuals to a higher risk of COVID-19 or adverse outcomes should they become infected with COVID-19. They add that corticosteroids should be avoided because of the potential for prolonging viral replication, unless indicated for other reasons (e.g., exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or refractory septic shock).

Limits on dispensing and sales of prescription and over-the-counter medicines

In order to ensure equitable access to medicines for all Australians, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, in consultation with the Department of Health, are requiring community pharmacists to [enforce new limits](#) on dispensing and sales of prescription and over-the-counter medicines. These requirements are:

- Pharmacists will be required to limit dispensing of certain prescription products to 1 month's supply at the prescribed dose, and sales of certain over-the-counter medicines to a maximum of one unit per purchase.
- Pharmacists will be strongly encouraged to limit dispensing and sales of all other medicines to one month's supply or one unit.

Newsworthy

Economic impact of COVID-19 is more of a concern than the health effects, poll finds

Canadians are more worried about the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic than they are over the health effects of the virus, a [new poll](#) suggests. The Campaign Research survey provided to the *Toronto Star* found a staggering 99 per cent of respondents are aware of the crisis — and 93 per cent are worried about the economy. "You just never see those kinds of numbers," Richard Ciano, a principal of Campaign Research, says.

This daily COVID-19 update is compiled by the Canadian Pharmacists Association. To unsubscribe, please reply to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Please note that this publication is meant to inform and is not a comprehensive list of information available. Be sure to check with your provincial regulatory authority or advocacy association for province-specific information. While we aim to ensure all information contained in this update is accurate, the situation is evolving rapidly and CPhA does not take responsibility for the content provided by other organizations and sources.

