

**From:** Public & Professional Affairs Department  
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**April 6, 2020**

## **CPhA**

### ***CPhA to represent pharmacist profession before Health Committee***

CPhA's Barry Power and Shelita Dattani are [scheduled to appear](#) before the Standing Committee on Health (HESA) tomorrow, April 7, to testify as part of the Committee's study on Canada's response to COVID-19. Other witnesses include representatives from the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians, Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, and the Canadian Medical Association.

### ***Drug therapy information: Fluticasone propionate pressurized metered dose inhaler shortage***

CPhA and medSask have developed a [document](#) to assist health care providers in managing patient care during the current fluticasone shortage.

### ***Upcoming webinar: A Day In the Life of Community Pharmacists During COVID-19: Stories from the Front Line***

Join us this week for our 4<sup>th</sup> COVID FAQ webinar where host Shelita Dattani will speak with a panel of front-line pharmacists across the country, sharing their stories about how daily practice has changed for community pharmacists and how their teams care for their patients during COVID-19. Registration opening soon.

CPhA's COVID-19 web pages are being updated regularly at [www.pharmacists.ca/covid19](http://www.pharmacists.ca/covid19) and [www.pharmacists.ca/covid19fr](http://www.pharmacists.ca/covid19fr).

## **Provincial**

### ***OPA calls for interim suspension of additional copayments to ODB recipients***

In a [statement](#) the Ontario Pharmacists Association urged the Ontario government to immediately implement an interim suspension of any additional copayments to Ontario Drug Benefit recipients stemming from the need to move to 30-day supplies on medications. "We are also urging all private drug plans and employer groups to consider similar interim suspensions of private insurance copayments and deductibles that result from monthly dispensing," said CEO Justin Bates.

### ***Spike in prescriptions of anti-malaria drugs prompts warning from AB regulators***

The governing bodies for Alberta doctors and pharmacists — and Alberta's top doctor herself — are issuing a stern warning after a spike in prescriptions for an anti-malarial drug touted as a potential treatment for COVID-19. The Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Alberta College of Pharmacy [said in a joint statement](#) that there has been an increase in prescriptions for certain antivirals, antibiotics and anti-malarial therapies (including the drugs hydroxychloroquine, chloroquine, remdesivir, lopinavir, ritonavir, colchicine and azithromycin, among others), and that it is not appropriate for these prescribing behaviours to continue.

### ***BCPhA calling for photos to illustrate drug and OTC shortages***

Over the past few weeks, the [BC Pharmacy Association](#) has been receiving individual reports that pharmacies across the province may be having trouble keeping their shelves stocked. In an effort to collect more information, BCPhA is calling on all community pharmacies to send in photographs of their over-the-counter and dispensary shelves. The association would share these photos with government and the public through information campaigns. This offers an opportunity to give the public and government an inside look at pharmacies to promote a better understanding of why medication supply management is crucial to keeping British Columbians healthy and safe during this pandemic.

### ***Pharmacist shortage spurs loosening of regulations in BC***

A shortage of pharmacists in BC to assist during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to loosening licencing requirements to get more trained staff behind pharmacy counters. The College of Pharmacists of British Columbia said on its [website](#) that temporary registration is now available for former registrants, non-practicing pharmacists, new graduates who are not yet full pharmacists and pharmacy students from outside BC.

## **National**

### ***CPA offering free psychological services to front-line service providers***

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on the mental health of Canadians, none more so than those who are working on the front lines of health care. Hundreds of registered psychologists have signed on to an initiative of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) to provide psychological services via tele-health to providers working on the front lines. [Learn more about this initiative and find a psychologist in your area.](#)

### ***Novo Nordisk announces 2020 price freeze on insulin***

Novo Nordisk will not increase the price of insulin in 2020, it said in a [news release](#) dated April 3. "In line with provincial requirements, the request to change the price of our insulins was put forward several months ago, long before the COVID-19 crisis emerged in Canada. We recognize the tremendous strain this pandemic has placed on our patients. We have made the decision to revoke price changes previously confirmed."

### ***Amazon to help manage distribution of PPE***

The federal government [announced](#) it has entered into an agreement with Amazon Canada to help manage the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) and supplies that have been purchased by the government to support the COVID-19 response. Amazon is providing these services to Canadians at cost, without profit. The company will work collaboratively with the government to process and manage orders through its online Amazon Business store. Amazon will use its Canadian distribution network, including delivery partners Canada Post and Purolator, to deliver these supplies to provincial health authorities, hospitals and other government agencies across the country.

### ***Health Canada looking for volunteers in fight against COVID-19***

The federal government is seeking volunteers with medical experience to provide backup support in the fight against COVID-19. Health Canada is [creating a database](#) of specialized volunteers provinces and territories can draw on to help track down people who have been in contact with positive cases, collect data and provide surge capacity at hospitals. The online application process was launched late last week. "It's asking people who have the skill set to do public health, like contact-tracing and other skills that provinces are looking for, to apply," says chief public health officer Dr. Theresa Tam.

## **Newsworthy**

### ***Pharmacies in NYC struggle to keep key medications stocked amid coronavirus outbreak***

"There's a shortage of everything." As tens of thousands of people test positive for the virus in New York City, communities are turning to their neighbourhood pharmacies for medications to treat their symptoms. The surge in demand, however, is straining supply chains and leading to shortages of basic medications like Tylenol and the antibiotic Zithromax Z-pak. For more, read this [report from CNBC](#).

## **Worth Repeating**

“We are the foundation of the health care system.” — Montreal pharmacist Tamara Begin speaks to [Global News Morning Montreal](#) about what it’s like being a front-line pharmacist during the pandemic outbreak.

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.

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