

From: Public & Professional Affairs Department
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April 28, 2020

CPhA

CPhA receives contribution for 200,000 surgical masks to be distributed to community pharmacies

This morning CPhA [announced \(en français\)](#) a financial contribution from Innovative Medicines Canada (IMC) that has allowed us to secure and distribute more than 200,000 surgical masks to community pharmacies across the country to support pharmacists and their teams who are continuing to deliver care to patients amid the COVID-19 pandemic. “We are tremendously grateful for the generous support from Innovative Medicines Canada and its members to purchase this much needed personal protective equipment,” says CPhA chair Christine Hrudka. Providing health care services during the pandemic requires an added level of care and precaution and accessing PPE has been a challenge for many pharmacists.

The COVID Conversations: Webinar recordings

Last week’s COVID Conversations webinar, [Supporting Pharmacists’ Mental Health and Wellness](#), is now available on our website. You can watch the full recording or jump to a specific topic discussed during the webinar. The COVID Conversations is CPhA’s open access webinar series designed to support pharmacists during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Montrez au monde ce que vous faites dans votre #PharmacieVieCA

Les équipes des pharmacies canadiennes redoublent vraiment d’efforts et nous voulons voir à quoi ressemble votre vie en ce moment! Le jeudi 30 avril, affichez sur Twitter ou Facebook [une photo qui décrit une journée de votre vie](#) pendant la COVID-19. Utilisez le mot-clic #PharmacieVieCA et identifiez @CPhAAPHc pour participer à la conversation. 1 jour. 1 photo. Montrez au monde ce que vous faites dans votre #PharmacieVieCA.

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

National

Mental Health Commission of Canada launches free online crisis training for essential workers

In response to added pressures on essential workers during COVID-19, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) has developed a trio of [free crisis response training programs](#) designed to help front-line workers deal with the stress of these exceptional circumstances. Not only are those working in essential roles during COVID-19 at increased physical risk, they may also be experiencing mental health challenges or be called upon to support a person experiencing a crisis. The three new online programs — [Caring for Yourself](#), [Caring for Your Team](#) and [Caring for Others](#) — are designed to help people deal with these new challenges and are based on the MHCC’s successful in-person courses: Mental Health First Aid and The Working Mind.

Continued lack of PPE and testing, high sources of anxiety for physicians, new CMA poll says

The majority of physicians are feeling anxious about the pandemic and say that having more PPE and increased testing would go

a long way to help ease that anxiety, says a [new poll](#) by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA). Close to 90% of physicians who responded to the survey indicated that a greater availability of PPE would help reduce their anxiety around the pandemic. The survey also points to nationwide concern over the levels of COVID-19 testing, with physicians overall (84%) indicating that more testing would help ease their concerns. The survey is a follow-up to a poll conducted at the end of March, with almost 2500 physicians responding.

International

CVS, Walgreens ramp up COVID-19 testing

Pharmacy retailers CVS Health Corp and Walgreens Boots Alliance unveiled plans to expand COVID-19 testing capabilities to meet increasing demand, [Reuters reports](#). Beginning in May, CVS Health will offer self-swab tests to individuals meeting the criteria of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The testing will be scheduled online and take place at select CVS Pharmacy locations in parking lots or at drive-through windows. CVS Health currently operates large-scale COVID-19 rapid test sites in 5 US states, with each site able to accommodate 1000 tests per day. Walgreens plans to open drive-through COVID-19 testing locations in 49 US states and Puerto Rico, the pharmacy chain said. The company currently has 15 testing sites in 7 states.

FAQs demystify testing

The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) has produced an [FAQ resource](#) to demystify COVID-19 testing. It outlines testing options, how to know which tests are recognized by FDA, and what qualifies a test to be provided in a pharmacy setting.

Healthcare Distribution Alliance addresses concerns with allocation practices

In a [letter to pharmacy association leaders](#), the Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA) has provided clarification on concerns that have recently emerged tied to wholesaler allocation practices. The letter provides assurances that, "In addition to a customer's historical ordering pattern, individual distributors may take into account, and prioritize differently, factors such as real-time information from manufacturers, states and the federal government, the specific clinical needs of providers in hot spots (e.g., number of ICU beds and patients) and other relevant third-party data."

Recommendations for minimizing waste during COVID-19

The American Society of Anesthesiologists and American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) [released joint recommendations](#) for minimizing medication waste during COVID-19. The recommendations focus on infection prevention and control, medication storage policies and beyond-use dating, and compounding medications. With the surge in COVID-19 cases resulting in shortages of some medications critical to patient care, institutions must balance the preservation of scarce resources with the risk of exposure from possible sources of contamination. In some cases, this may include deciding whether to discard unused and unopened medications that might be contaminated with the SARS-CoV-2 virus to prevent spread of the infection to patients and health care workers.

FDA warns about bogus hand sanitizer claims

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration is [warning consumers](#) that some companies are selling hand sanitizers with unproven claims that they will protect them from COVID-19. Last week, the agency issued its first warning letter for a hand sanitizer marketed with unproven COVID-19-related claims that violated federal law. The letter was issued to Prefense LLC for making misleading statements about its hand sanitizer, such as "Prefense ... protects you from germs with just one application per day! It's like wearing an invisible glove."

Arthritis drug delivers disappointing results in clinical studies

An arthritis drug that was seen as a promising treatment for some COVID-19 patients delivered disappointing results in clinical studies, [STAT reports](#). The results for the drug, manufactured by Regeneron Pharmaceuticals and Sanofi, could have an impact not only for their treatment (Kevzara) but also for a similar drug from Roche (Actemra) that is being used off-label in many hospitals. It also may lower the odds that other repurposed medicines used against autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid

arthritis will benefit COVID-19 patients.

Newsworthy

Lethbridge pharmacist and distiller team up to offer inexpensive hand sanitizer

Many businesses have taken advantage of people's dire need for certain medical equipment and supplies but some, like a Lethbridge pharmacist and a local distillery, are doing quite the opposite: [teaming up](#) to pay it forward in a pandemic.

Worth Repeating

"We are happy to see frontline staff recognised but it's just more that [others] were left out on the list. The pharmacists are extremely disappointed to not be recognized, but it seems to be quite common throughout this pandemic." -- Christina Adams, chief pharmacy officer, Canadian Society of Pharmacists, [responding](#) after the Ontario government left out hospital pharmacists (and others) in a \$4 an hour premium for employees on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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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