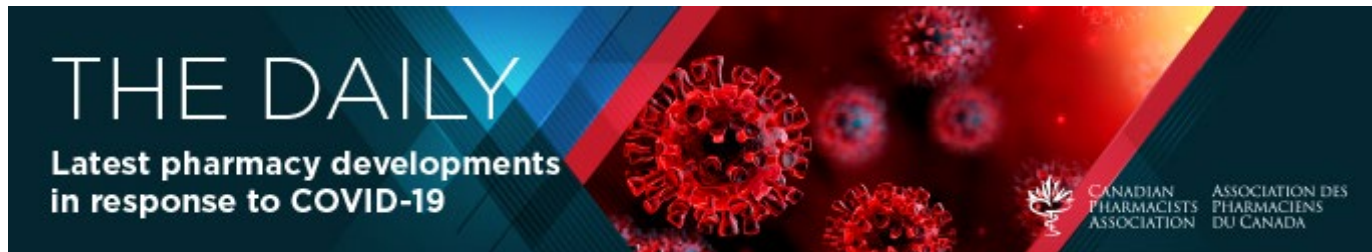


**From:** Public & Professional Affairs Department  
**Sent:** April 30, 2020 4:26 PM  
**Subject:** The Daily: CPhA's COVID-19 Update for April 30



**April 30, 2020**

## **CPhA**

### ***Share a snapshot of your #PharmacyLifeCA***

It's not too late to get in on the action and share a snap of your [#PharmacyLifeCA](#) / [#PharmacieVieCA](#) on our social media channels! Take a look at what your pharmacy colleagues are up to and share your story with us and the world.

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**

### ***Pharmacies included in free emergency child care during COVID-19***

The Ontario government is [further expanding](#) the list of essential workers eligible to receive free emergency child care during the COVID-19 outbreak. Those who will benefit include people who work in the food supply chain, retirement homes, grocery stores, pharmacies and certain federal employees, including the military. Since emergency child care was introduced last month, almost 100 child care centres have reopened along with 40 Licensed Home Child Care Agencies in communities across the province.

## **National**

### ***Optimizing N95 masks during shortages***

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a shortage of N95 respirator masks. As a result, various strategies are being explored and suggested to increase the availability of N95 masks in this time of shortage, such as the extended use of N95 respirator masks, use of the masks past their shelf lives, methods for sterilizing and reusing N95 masks, and more. A Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health ([CADTH](#)) [report](#) summarizes current recommendations and will be updated regularly as additional guidance becomes available.

## **International**

### ***RPS welcomes inclusion of pharmacists in death in service benefit***

Matt Hancock, England's secretary of state for health and social care, announced that pharmacists will now be included in the government's new death in service benefit for health care workers who die of COVID-19. [Responding to the announcement](#), Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) president Sandra Gidley said, "We would like to thank the government for listening to concerns raised by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the profession about including pharmacists in the death in service benefit scheme. We look forward to receiving similar assurances from the Scottish Government and have already received them from the Welsh Government."

### ***FIP issues holding statement on COVID-19 testing and hydroxychloroquine***

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has released a [holding statement on COVID-19](#) focused on testing and the use of hydroxychloroquine/chloroquine as a treatment. For testing, “where governments decide to implement the scaled-up use of such tests across populations, FIP would encourage and support pharmacists to play an appropriate role and we see evidence of the accessibility of community pharmacists in pharmacies during the COVID-19 pandemic, with appropriate PPE and space to undertake testing,” the statement reads. As it relates to hydroxychloroquine/chloroquine, FIP says the documented benefit is very limited, especially in severe disease. To date, available clinical trials have not demonstrated that either of these drugs are clearly effective. “However, until future studies better elucidate the most effective schedule of administration and potential adverse effects, we cannot assume hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine are treatments for the disease,” the statement adds. An FIP holding statement is an initial statement released pending further evidence and about which FIP intends to make a further statement.

### ***Update: remdesivir trials***

A top [US health official has said](#) that Gilead Sciences Inc.'s experimental antiviral drug remdesivir is likely to become the standard of care for COVID-19 after early results from a key clinical trial showed it helped certain patients recover more quickly from the illness caused by the coronavirus. The study, run by the [US National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH), tested remdesivir versus usual care in 1063 hospitalized coronavirus patients around the world. At the White House, NIH's Dr. Anthony Fauci said the drug reduced the time it takes patients to recover by 31 per cent — 11 days on average versus 15 days for those just given usual care. This news was tempered with a [report from \*The Lancet\*](#) that said the first randomized trial of remdesivir suggests the antiviral drug is not associated with significant clinical benefits and that the drug did not speed recovery or reduce deaths from COVID-19 compared with a placebo in hospitalized patients.

### ***Rushed introduction of electronic Rx during COVID-19 will cause chaos***

The planned fast-tracking of electronic prescriptions will cause unnecessary chaos and be a backward step for patient care at exactly the wrong time, [according to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia](#). The imminent fast-tracking of the electronic prescriptions (FTEP) is part of the Australian government’s COVID-19 National Health Plan. “On behalf of the community pharmacists working in thousands of pharmacies across Australia, the Pharmacy Guild cannot support the introduction of a measure that will impose further significant disruption at a time when community pharmacies are already under intense pressures to support their patients during COVID-19.”

### ***New legislation on controlled drugs during COVID-19***

The UK government passed [legislation](#) that allows pharmacists to provide controlled drugs to patients who have previously been prescribed them, without the need for a new prescription. The legislation enables patients to continue to receive access to the medicines they need directly from a pharmacist, under exceptional circumstances, including the closure of GP practices or other services in an area because of COVID-19, and where the patient’s health is at risk.

### ***Flu vaccine requests surge during pandemic***

The number of Argentinians who asked for the flu vaccine in pharmacies in the last 2 weeks of April was 3 times higher than those who received it in the same period last year, [according to the Argentine Pharmaceutical Confederation](#) (article in Spanish). The high demand is explained by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has prompted people over the age of 65 and members of other risk groups who normally don’t get the vaccine to go to the pharmacy to get vaccinated. However, the lack of doses available has triggered complaints.

### ***Pharmacist support line addresses COVID-19 concerns***

A pharmacist support line has been [created by the Portuguese Pharmaceutical Society](#) (notice in Portuguese) to answer questions and concerns from pharmacists during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the initial 2 weeks of operation, beginning on April 16, the line registered almost 5000 calls, most of which were related to the dispensing of hospital medicines in community pharmacies, a measure approved by the Portuguese government to avoid non-essential outpatient visits to hospitals. Among the most discussed topics were personal protective equipment for pharmacists, disinfectants and antiseptics, and preventive

measures and action relating to suspected cases.

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.