

From: Public & Professional Affairs Department
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Subject: The Daily: CPhA's COVID-19 Update for June 16



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CPhA

New scope of practice and services scans now available

CPhA has published several scans and resources highlighting how pharmacists can care for patients and prevent any disruption to patients' medication therapy during COVID-19. These scans also include changes to pharmacists' scope of practice related to controlled drugs and substances and other scope and service changes implemented across the country since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The new resources, [Pharmacists' scope of practice during COVID-19 \(Champ d'exercice du pharmacien pendant COVID-19\)](#), [COVID-19 and controlled drugs and substances](#) and [Pharmacy services implemented since COVID-19](#), are available now on our website.

H₂-receptor antagonist shortages document now available

CPhA and medSask have developed a document to assist health care providers in managing patient care in the event of a shortage of H₂-receptor antagonist (H₂RA). The document is available on our website in [English](#) and [French](#).

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

Provincial

Provinces lift 30-day prescription drug limits

All Canadian provinces have now eased their restrictions on the supply of prescription drugs. As of yesterday, the respective policies in [Alberta](#), [Ontario](#) and [Quebec](#) were lifted and residents will be able to move back to normal quantities. These policies were implemented across the country in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that patients would not run out of medications and to avoid medication stockpiling.

National

Ottawa orders 13.5 million non-medical cloth masks

The federal government has issued a tender for 13.5 million non-medical cloth masks, coming almost full circle on the issue of face coverings for the public to combat the spread of COVID-19, the [National Post reports](#). The order will produce enough masks to equip 1 in every 3 Canadians, plus some, though it's unclear exactly who will receive them or how they will be distributed. The tender issued by Public Services and Procurement Canada says the masks are not for health care workers but for other employees whose work may lead to "inadvertent exposure to this virus."

Survey: Impact of COVID-19 on Canadian pharmacy practice

Researchers at the University of Alberta are conducting [a survey](#) on the impact of COVID-19 on Canadian pharmacy practice. The purpose of this study is to identify the impact of COVID-19 on Canadian pharmacy practice, including the pharmacy practice

environment and pharmacists' roles in Canada. The target audience for the survey is Canadian pharmacists who have provided direct patient care in some capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Webinar: Industry response to COVID-19: Vaccines and treatments

On June 24, BioAlberta is hosting [a webinar](#) featuring Innovative Medicines Canada president Pamela Fralick speaking about the unprecedented collaboration among pharmaceutical companies, research centres, universities and governments during COVID-19. Participants will learn more about the local and global response and the race to discover, develop and deliver new medicines and vaccines for COVID-19.

International

Major study finds common steroid reduces deaths among patients with severe COVID-19

A new study shows that an inexpensive, readily available steroid drug reduced deaths by a third in patients hospitalized with COVID-19, marking the first time a therapy has been shown to possibly improve the odds of survival in the sickest patients, [STAT reports](#). Full data from the study have not been published or subjected to scientific scrutiny, but outside experts immediately embraced the top-line results. The drug, dexamethasone, is widely available and is used to treat conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, asthma and some cancers.

FDA revokes emergency use ruling for hydroxychloroquine

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has withdrawn an emergency approval for use of the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine as a COVID-19 treatment. In a [letter](#) dated June 15, the agency says that the drug, along with chloroquine, is “unlikely to be effective in treating COVID-19,” and highlighted its “serious side effects.”

FDA warns of hydroxychloroquine interaction with remdesivir

Hours after revoking its emergency use authorization for hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine to treat COVID-19, the FDA warned that these drugs could interact with remdesivir, the experimental Gilead Sciences treatment, by reducing its antiviral activity, [Regulatory Focus reports](#). Remdesivir, which is also authorized under an emergency use authorization (EUA), is now the only drug authorized to treat COVID-19 in the US. The FDA granted the EUA for remdesivir in early May.

The next COVID-19 challenge: Convincing people to get flu shots

Public health officials, doctors and pharmacists who have struggled for decades to convince Americans to get the flu shot are warning it is now more important than ever to get vaccinated, as the US faces a potential second wave of COVID-19 in the fall, [reports The Hill](#). Coinciding flu and COVID-19 outbreaks could overwhelm hospital and drain resources, threatening lives and the response to the pandemic. Getting vaccinated could keep thousands of flu patients out of the hospitals and preserve resources that are urgently needed for COVID-19, experts say.

COVID-19 infection control could cut community pharmacy capacity for flu vaccinations by two-thirds

Community pharmacies in the UK could have just a third of their previous capacity to deliver flu vaccinations during winter 2020/2021 as a result of COVID-19 infection control measures, the pharmacy vaccination lead for London says. [Speaking to The Pharmaceutical Journal](#), Rekha Shah, chief executive of the Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster Local Pharmaceutical Committee, says that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will likely require pharmacists to change their apron and gloves “at a minimum” between patients when giving flu vaccinations. Her comments come as the Pharmaceutical Service Negotiating Committee (PSNC) says pharmacies should expect a “greater demand” for flu vaccines in winter 2020/2021 from all eligible cohorts.

RPS guidance on contingency legislation to enable the supply of controlled drugs

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) [has developed guidance](#) for pharmacy teams wishing to prepare for contingencies in the event that controlled drug legislation is activated. Legislation was introduced to enable ministers in Great Britain and the Department of Health in Northern Ireland to “switch on” flexibilities for the supply of controlled drugs during a pandemic. These

flexibilities have not been activated at this time.

Upcoming FIP webinar explores COVID-19: Women front and centre

Given that the COVID-19 pandemic affects men and women in different ways, measures must take gender into account. The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is presenting a webcast on June 17 entitled [COVID-19: Women front and centre](#), which will focus on the challenges that women in pharmacy face from all sectors, emphasize the critical role of women in resolving this crisis and outline the role of pharmacists in empowering women within the community to strengthen pharmacy's response in combatting the pandemic.

FIP: Hydroxychloroquine/chloroquine holding statement updated

With recent developments around studies of hydroxychloroquine as a treatment for COVID-19, the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has updated its [Holding Statement on treatment with hydroxychloroquine/chloroquine](#). The statement reads, in part: "Given the substantial morbidity and mortality associated with COVID-19, FIP welcomes any re-purposing of existing therapies with sufficient evidence of efficacy and safety across all populations and groups. However, until future studies better elucidate the most effective schedule of administration and potential adverse effects, we cannot assume hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine are safe and efficacious treatments for the disease."

Newsorthy

COVID-19 cases jump by a million in 1 week to reach 8 million worldwide

Just 1 week after the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases worldwide hit 7 million, that number surpassed 8 million on Monday, [Global News reports](#). It's the fastest pace that a million new cases have been recorded since the COVID-19 pandemic began, according to public health data tracked and [compiled by Johns Hopkins University](#). As of Monday evening, cases stood at over 8.03 million, with more than 435,000 deaths. The rapid surge in cases suggests that while some countries have gotten a hold of their outbreaks, others, particularly in Latin America and parts of Asia, are only getting worse.

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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