

**From:** Public & Professional Affairs Department  
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**June 25, 2020**

## **CPhA**

### ***The COVID Conversations: Recordings available online***

CPhA's [COVID Conversations](#) open access webinar series is designed to support pharmacists during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since early March we've hosted 8 panel discussion on important issues, including personal protective equipment, pharmacists' mental health and well-being, opioid stewardship under the new CDSA exemptions and the role of pharmacy in public and population health. All of these webinars are available for free on our website both as full recordings, and as short, specific clips.

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).

## **National**

### ***Health Canada: Recall of hand sanitizers that contain technical-grade ethanol***

Health Canada is advising Canadians that certain hand sanitizers containing technical-grade ethanol [are being recalled](#) from the market because they are not compliant with federal regulations and may pose a risk to health. Given supply shortages of pharmaceutical- and food-grade ethanol, on April 15, 2020, Health Canada permitted the temporary use of technical-grade ethanol in alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Health Canada has directed the manufacturers to stop the sale of these products and is monitoring the effectiveness of the recalls.

### ***Many Canadians dealing with mental health issues due to COVID-19: survey***

The mental health of Canadians is still being affected by COVID-19. A new survey, released Tuesday by the Conference Board of Canada and the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), reveals that COVID-19 continues to cause anxiety when it comes to employment status, income level and the availability of coping strategies, [Global News reports](#). A whopping 84% of respondents reported that their mental health concerns had worsened since the onset of the pandemic. Among the biggest concerns were well-being and family wellness, their personal future, isolation and loneliness, and anxiousness or fear.

### ***Health Canada warns of products that make false/misleading claims to treat COVID-19***

Health Canada is warning Canadians to be careful about buying products — including drugs, natural health items, homeopathic products and medical devices — that make “false or misleading claims” to prevent, treat or cure COVID-19 [reports the Sudbury Star](#). The agency said it has received reports about health products that make false or misleading claims and has issued letters to several companies directing them to immediately remove these claims from their websites and advertising materials. The products include some masks, colloidal silver, some disinfectants, plant-based elixirs and formulas, hand sanitizers, Chaga mushroom blends, ultraviolet lamps, and oregano oil.

### ***Two-thirds of Canadians favour continued physical distancing, poll suggests***

Two-thirds of Canadians don't want to relax physical distancing rules imposed to curb the spread of COVID-19, a new poll

suggests. And even if they were relaxed, a strong majority wouldn't be comfortable taking part in activities that would bring them closer to other people, like going to a movie theatre. [The survey](#), conducted by Leger and the Association for Canadian Studies, found that 66% of respondents felt that 2 metres should remain the safe distance kept between people, as recommended by Canada's public health authorities.

## **International**

### ***Pharmacy experts discuss pharmacists' expanding role as vaccinators***

With the upcoming flu season this fall likely to collide with a second wave of COVID-19 and vaccinations suspended amid the pandemic, pharmacists, who have been embracing their role as vaccinators, will undoubtedly have a role in increasing vaccinations rates and preventing disease, [says Drug Store News](#). In a [webinar](#) held Monday, representatives from the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPHA), the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) and Walgreens highlighted pharmacy's role in delivering vaccinations. The panellists also outlined the technology and resources empowering pharmacists as vaccinators, plus COVID-19 precautionary measures to ensure patients and staff are safe.

### ***FIP: National Champions for Change initiative seeks pharmacists' input***

The Community Pharmacy Section of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has introduced [National Champions for Change](#), an initiative in which pharmacists are asked to submit their thoughts and ideas on how better to help manage the COVID-19 crisis and potential new waves by answering a [short survey](#). Deadline for submissions is July 12.

### ***Joint statement on new FDA action to remove emergency use authorization of medications to treat COVID-19***

In a [joint statement](#), APhA, the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) and the American Medical Association (AMA) emphasize that the FDA's recent announcement to cancel the emergency use authorizations for hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine for certain hospitalized patients with COVID-19 does not apply to other evidence-based uses of these medications for conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. The organizations continue to advocate for medication-use policies that ensure patients who need hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine do not face unintended barriers to evidence-based care.

### ***CVS to offer employers COVID-19 testing program as US cases rise***

As US employers grapple with trying to keep workers healthy and on the job amid fresh spikes in COVID-19 cases, CVS Health Corp. has begun selling companies a diagnostic testing program, [Reuters reports](#). In addition to onsite and pharmacy testing, CVS also will create plans for temperature and symptom checks, seasonal flu vaccines and other immunizations, and will offer add-on services like contact tracing technology for employees.

### ***RPS: Urgent action needed on BAME risk assessments***

According to a [survey](#) from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) and the UK Black Pharmacists Association (UKBPA), more than two-thirds of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pharmacists and pre-registration pharmacists across primary and secondary care have still not had access to potentially lifesaving COVID-19 risk assessments. The same survey reveals that 78% of black pharmacists and pre-regs believe they are at risk of COVID-19 and changes to their working practices are required, compared to 67% of white colleagues. These findings come nearly 2 months after the NHS said employers should risk-assess staff at potentially greater risk — a recommendation reinforced in a report from Public Health England last week on the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups.

### ***WHO proposal for distribution of COVID-19 treatments and vaccines***

The World Health Organization (WHO) set out its [proposal](#) for the distribution of future coronavirus treatments and vaccines, with over 4 billion doses needed to vaccinate the world's priority populations, [Politico writes](#). The goal of its Global Allocation Framework should be to reduce COVID-19 mortality and protect health systems, WHO says. Accordingly, 3 groups should receive priority vaccinations: health care workers; adults older than 65; and adults with comorbidities such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

### ***Clinical trials of inhaled remdesivir to begin in August***

Gilead Sciences plans to begin clinical trials of an inhaled version of its experimental remdesivir antiviral treatment for COVID-19 patients in August, [CNBC reports](#). The drug is currently used intravenously. An inhaled formulation would be given through a nebulizer, which could potentially allow for easier administration outside hospitals. Meanwhile, the drug maker expects to be able to supply enough of the drug by year-end to treat more than 2 million COVID-19 patients, more than double its previous target of 1 million.

### ***Surge in demand for dexamethasone***

After preliminary release of a study found that an inexpensive steroid reduced deaths by a third in hospitalized COVID-19 patients, hospitals across the US saw a surge in demand for the drug, and there is a shortage of several injectable versions, [STAT reports](#). Specifically, hospital orders for dexamethasone, a commonly used and inexpensive corticosteroid, spiked 183% on June 16, when study researchers released top-line data. And the rate at which orders were able to be filled and shipped to hospitals plummeted from 97% to just 54% by June 19.

## **Newsworthy**

### ***Canada's proportion of coronavirus deaths in nursing homes top 16 other nations: CIHI study***

A new study has found that the proportion of Canadian COVID-19 deaths that have occurred in long-term care facilities is about twice the average of rates from other developed nations, [The Canadian Press reports](#). The [analysis](#) released today by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) provides a damning snapshot of senior care as of May 25 when LTC residents made up 81% of all reported COVID-19 deaths in the country compared to an average of 42% among all countries studied.

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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