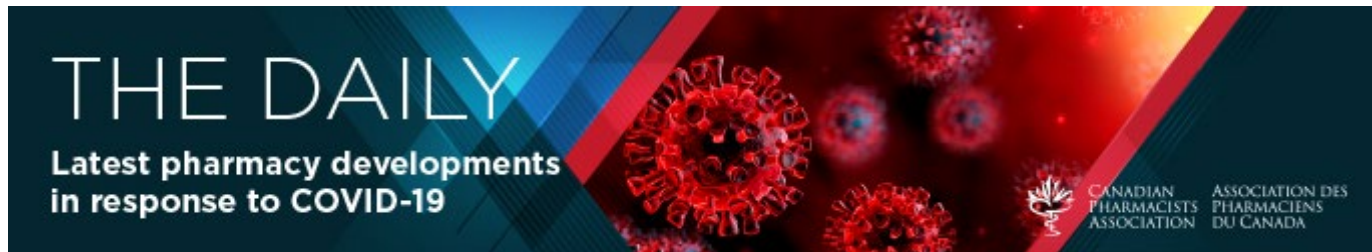


**From:** Public & Professional Affairs Department  
**Sent:** May 13, 2020 4:28 PM  
**Subject:** The Daily: CPhA's COVID-19 Update for May 13



**May 13, 2020**

## **CPhA**

### ***The COVID Conversations: The Role of Pharmacy in Public and Population Health***

Join host Shelita Dattani on **Wednesday, May 20** at **11 AM EDT** for a discussion on the role that pharmacy can or should play in overall public and population health. Leading pharmacist experts in public health and community pharmacy owners on the front lines in both Canada and the United States will review some of the pros and cons of pharmacists providing public health services such as immunizations and point-of-care testing, with a particular emphasis on the debate surrounding the role of pharmacy in testing for COVID-19. This session's featured guests include Michael Hogue, president, American Pharmacists Association; Nancy Waite, professor and associate director clinical education, University of Waterloo; Beth Bryan, pharmacist and owner, Surgoinsville Pharmacy; and Kristen Watt, pharmacist and owner, RxHealthMed Store. [Registration is now open.](#)

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 approves first test to detect antibodies for COVID-19***

Health Canada has [approved a test](#) that can detect antibodies specific to COVID-19 in an individual's blood, allowing Canadian labs to take a significant step forward in understanding immunity against the disease. The test is the first of its kind to be approved in Canada and will help scientists determine whether a person was exposed to COVID-19 and, more importantly, whether or not they still have virus-fighting antibodies in their system. The test, called the DiaSorin LIAISON, was approved yesterday following "priority scientific review," Health Canada says.

### ***COVID-19 prompts federal government to look at boosting vaccine production capacity***

The federal government is investing in manufacturing plants across the country to boost production capacity so that Canada can quickly produce the millions of doses required when a vaccine for COVID-19 is available. Research on more than 100 possible vaccines is happening around the globe, but finding a vaccine is just the first step with making it in large volumes a major challenge, [says the National Post](#). Vaccines are produced in highly specialized manufacturing facilities with expensive equipment and well-trained staff. Andrew Casey, president of BIOTECanada, says companies don't have the extra capacity to produce a vaccine that virtually every Canadian will want.

### ***NRC and CanSino Biologics announce collaboration to advance vaccine against COVID-19***

The National Research Council (NRC) of Canada [announced a collaboration](#) with CanSino Biologics Inc. (CanSinoBIO) to advance bioprocessing and clinical development in Canada of a candidate vaccine against COVID-19. Referred to as Ad5-nCoV, the vaccine candidate received Chinese regulatory approval earlier this year, allowing CanSinoBIO to move ahead with human clinical trials in China. It is one of only a handful of vaccine candidates in the world against COVID-19 so far approved for initial safety testing in humans, and was the first candidate vaccine to begin conducting Phase II human clinical trials.

### ***NRC and USask's VIDO-InterVac collaborate to advance development of vaccine against COVID-19***

The National Research Council (NRC) of Canada and the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-International Vaccine Centre (VIDO-InterVac) [announced a collaboration](#) to work together to accelerate the development and production of a candidate COVID-19 antigen in mammalian cells. The antigen is a key component of a vaccine against COVID-19. Vaccines work by providing the human immune system with a sneak peek at a virus, in advance of possible infection. This allows the immune system time to recognize the threat and prepare antibodies, so that it's ready when it encounters the actual virus. VIDO-InterVac has identified a recombinant protein antigen that will serve as a primary part of a vaccine candidate against COVID-19.

### ***Contact tracing for potential exposure to COVID-19***

CADTH conducted a [Rapid Response search](#) for evidence-based guidelines regarding contact tracing for people who have been in contact with a person with a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. No relevant evidence-based guidelines were identified; therefore, no conclusions can be drawn.

## **International**

### ***WHO says work on COVID-19 vaccine accelerated***

The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) says that there are around 7 or 8 “top” candidates for a vaccine to combat COVID-19 and work on them is being accelerated, the [Associated Press reports](#). WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a UN Economic and Social Council that 2 months ago it was thought it may take 12 to 18 months for a vaccine. But an accelerated effort is under way, helped by US\$8 billion pledged a week ago by leaders from 40 countries, organizations, and banks for research, treatment and testing.

### ***Remdesivir: EMA recommends wider compassionate use***

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) recommended expanding compassionate use programs for remdesivir to treat COVID-19 patients who are not on mechanical ventilation, according to [Regulatory Focus](#). The recommendation is based on the preliminary results from a study run by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that found patients treated with remdesivir had a 31% shorter time to recovery than patients taking a placebo.

### ***Risk of COVID-19 frivolous lawsuits a worry: survey***

Local pharmacists on the front lines battling the coronavirus pandemic worry they're at risk of frivolous lawsuits that limit their ability to care for patients, [according to a survey](#) released by the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) in the US. According to the survey, 72% of community pharmacists are concerned about being named in a COVID-19 lawsuit. An astonishing 99.8% believe Congress must protect them from liability in the next round of coronavirus legislation.

### ***FDA clarifies pharmacists' role in COVID-19 testing***

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has [updated its FAQs section](#) to acknowledge the role pharmacists play in COVID-19 testing. Specifically, the FDA notes that pharmacists are considered “patient care providers” for the purposes of testing and provides pharmacy-specific questions and answers. These changes are a result of collaboration between the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), American Pharmacists Association (APhA), National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA), American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP) and the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) to request FDA clarification on how pharmacists can effectively engage in COVID-19 diagnostic testing.

### ***Pharmacists on front line of second pandemic: Medicine misinformation and falsified treatments***

Pharmacists are not only on the front line of the campaign against the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are also combating a secondary, parallel pandemic of “falsified medicines, medical supplies and ‘infodemic’ of misinformation,” say Australian researchers in an article published in the [Australian Journal of Pharmacy](#). A literature review conducted by researchers from the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the University of Queensland has explored the role pharmacists

can play in deterring medication misinformation. The pandemic had fuelled a surge in counterfeit medicine sales—a parallel pandemic of fake “essential” medicines (including the COVID-19 candidate drug chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine) and other medical supplies, they say. The paper was published in the journal *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*.

## **Newsorthy**

### ***With little data, doctors struggle to decide which COVID-19 patients should get remdesivir***

Now that the federal government has [begun distributing](#) the experimental COVID-19 drug remdesivir, hospitals are in a bind, [reports STAT](#). So far, it’s the only medication that has shown benefit for coronavirus patients in rigorous studies. But there isn’t enough for everyone who’s eligible, leaving doctors with a wrenching ethical decision: Who gets the drug and who doesn’t?

## **Worth Repeating**

“Given the media hype around hydroxychloroquine, given messaging coming out of the White House and out of President Trump, there are a lot of people that are wanting to believe that hydroxychloroquine is that panacea, that magical drug that will protect us against COVID-19.” — Allan Malek, chief pharmacy officer for the Ontario Pharmacists Association on [why the surge in sales of hydroxychloroquine](#) has led to a shortage for patients who actually need it

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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