

**Subject:**

The Weekly: CPhA's Pharmacy News Update for March 30

**From:** Canadian Pharmacists Association <advocacy@pharmacists.ca>**Sent:** March 30, 2022 5:00 PM**Subject:** The Weekly: CPhA's Pharmacy News Update for March 30View in [browser](#) / Afficher dans le navigateur [Web](#)

Canadian  
Pharmacists  
Association

Association des  
pharmaciens  
du Canada

# The Weekly

Bringing the world of pharmacy together

**March 30, 2022****CPhA*****'Celebrating Canadian pharmacy' showcases work of pharmacy within health-care system***

Dr. Danielle Paes, chief pharmacist officer at CPhA, [spoke with Mediaplanet](#) in a Celebrating Canadian Pharmacy supplement, published online and in the March 27 print edition of the *Toronto Star*, about her role in advancing the pharmacy profession with a special focus on engagement, wellness, and diversity, equity and inclusion.

***CPhA: National scope would be beneficial in providing access to COVID-19 medication***

Pharmacists should be playing a bigger role in prescribing and dispensing a new COVID-19 antiviral medication to ensure patients get the drug during the 5-day treatment window, [the Globe and Mail reports](#). Paxlovid, the brand name of the first oral antiviral medication approved by Health Canada to treat COVID-19, is in short supply in much of the country and can be difficult to find. In many provinces, people who meet the narrow criteria for access to the drug, which was approved in January, often have to navigate a complex process requiring visits to multiple physical locations in order to get the medication. The drug can also have serious interactions with dozens of other common medications, so people who get a prescription will

likely need assistance from a pharmacist who has expertise in managing such issues. Dr. Danielle Paes, chief pharmacist officer at CPhA, said this situation highlights why a national scope of practice would be beneficial, allowing pharmacists to play a consistent role and be part of the conversation when policy decisions about drugs and related issues are made. “There’s a need for a thoughtful approach to make sure we are using this very valuable tool and treatment option in a way that helps as many Canadians as possible,” she said. “I think it is possible.”

### ***PAM 2022: That’s a wrap!***

We’re now in the final 2 days of [Pharmacy Appreciation Month](#) (PAM) in Canada—the annual national campaign that shines a spotlight on all things pharmacy and celebrates the extraordinary efforts and contributions of pharmacy professionals to Canada’s health-care system. Here’s an overview of how CPhA has been celebrating:

- **31 Days of Pharmacy** – In one of our most popular promotions, CPhA has been shining a light on one of the many amazing pharmacy professionals and pharmacy teams each day on social media. [Email us](#) a picture of yourself or your pharmacy team in action, with the name and location (city and province/territory) of your pharmacy and the full names of any team members in the photo.
- **#MyFavePharm Patient Contest** – We asked patients to tell us why they love their pharmacy team by nominating them for a chance to win a tablet for themselves and their favourite pharmacy team member. This year’s winner is Anita Acai from Guelph, Ontario, who [nominated](#) her pharmacist, Dr. Kris Mendoza.
- **Pharmacist of the Year** – Keep an eye out on social media tomorrow as we announce the 2022 Canadian Pharmacist of the Year to cap off the month.

For more information on how you can get involved, check out our [communications toolkit](#) and join the conversation on social media using the hashtags #PAM2022 and #ThankYouPharmacy

---

## **Pharmacists on the front line**

### ***Close to \$5,000 raised for Ukraine at Cochrane, AB, pharmacy***

Reid Kimmett, co-owner and operations manager of Two Pharmacy, knew Cochrane and area residents would step up to support Ukraine and he was not disappointed, [Cochrane Now reports](#). On March 26, Two Pharmacy held a Ukrainian Relief Support Day where 100% of the storefront and online profits at the pharmacy were donated to the Canadian Red Cross-Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal. “It was a great day, definitely a busy day in the store but one where the mood was happy,” Kimmett said. “People felt like they had a purpose, felt like they were doing good for others. Really a positive day for all of our staff.” The community saw \$4,918.32 raised for the cause, reaching their goal for the event. “It was heartwarming for all of us here, and I think in the days of divisiveness we’ve been living the last couple of years, I think we all needed that,” he said.

### ***Rural pharmacies fill gaps in health care***

At Tellier Pharmacy in Bonnyville, Alberta, there is a team of people who work together to ensure patients are taken care of. Caitlin McGrath, store operator and pharmacy manager, [told Lakeland Today](#) that the role of a pharmacist—and others who work at pharmacies—is somewhat unique in how they are able to help patients navigate the health-care system. Pharmacists often collaborate with other health-care professionals—and the entire system is built on working together—but in rural areas such as the communities scattered across the Lakeland, physician shortages and other health-care challenges can be a reality. The ability for pharmacists to help patients has flourished. In rural areas, where there has sometimes been additional strain put on health-care systems, pharmacists have been able to step up. They have the ability to review medications with patients and take part in ongoing conversations about lifestyle and health, and ensure everything is “safe and appropriate,” McGrath said. Pharmacists also have prescribing rights for some ailments, which can reduce strain on walk-in clinics and other emergent care, and extend prescriptions while patients wait for appointments. Creating relationships comes somewhat naturally, McGrath added, since patients often visit their pharmacy on a monthly basis—or even more often.

---

## Provincial

### ***BC pharmacy investigated for allegedly helping people fake vaccine records***

A pharmacy in BC's Lower Mainland is being investigated for allegedly helping unvaccinated individuals sneak their names into the province's COVID-19 vaccine registry, [CTV reports](#). That would allow people to download the BC Vaccine Card—which is still required for a number of discretionary activities, including dining in restaurants—without being immunized. BC Health Minister Adrian Dix said the matter remains under investigation, but that the Burnaby pharmacy is no longer participating in the government's immunization program. The BC Pharmacy Association says it supports the government's investigation, calling the integrity of the province's vaccine program “extremely important.” “The COVID-19 vaccine helps keep our communities safe. British Columbians should know that when an individual is identifying themselves as fully vaccinated, that they are indeed fully vaccinated,” a spokesperson said in an email.

### ***BC MLA tours pharmacy to see potential of pharmacists' role in health care***

With BC's health-care system under strain, Vernon-Monashee MLA Harwinder Sandhu went to a local pharmacy in search of solutions, [according to the Vernon Morning Star](#). Curtis Omelchuk, owner and pharmacist at Sterling Rx in Vernon, gave Sandhu a tour of the pharmacy with the goal of showing how underutilized pharmacists are in the health-care system. “People don't realize that we have 11,000 pharmacies across Canada, perhaps more, and 45,000 pharmacists and 9,900 pharmacy techs . . . so there's a lot of force behind work that's helping people to support their health, mental health and filling the health care gaps,” Sandhu said. Omelchuk says treatment of minor ailments, initiating prescriptions for set conditions, refilling prescriptions more freely, and interpreting lab results to alter therapy are all services that pharmacists can and should be allowed to provide. “Everybody's getting overloaded, more than ever, and now's the perfect time to get our profession more involved,” he said. “We're ready. Everybody's ready,

we're willing and we're trained."

### ***Demand for COVID-19 vaccines in NB slowing down: pharmacists' association***

In New Brunswick, only 51% of the eligible population has received a COVID-19 booster dose, but the province's pharmacists' association says the uptake on vaccines is slowing down. "We've seen slowing demands really since the start of the year, probably since late January," Jake Reid, executive director of the New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association, [told Global News](#). Despite the slowdown, he said there are a "trickle" of 400 to 500 people coming into local pharmacies daily. Reid said there is a general sense of complacency when it comes to getting the vaccine. "That's the worry factor," he said. "Because this can still be very deadly. We don't know what happens when people have had COVID-19 after a couple of years, we don't have the data on that yet."

---

## **National**

### ***Premiers launch awareness campaign on health-care funding***

Canada's premiers have launched an [online awareness campaign](#) to inform Canadians about the urgent need for long-term, flexible federal funding for health care. "We must ensure our health care systems can provide the services Canadians need, when they need them," said British Columbia Premier John Horgan, chair of the Council of the Federation. "Increased, predictable and sustainable federal funding will make a tangible difference in people's lives. The problems Canadians experienced in accessing health care services during the pandemic have highlighted strains in our health systems that will continue unless the federal government increases its investment." The Canada Health Transfer (CHT) is the most effective mechanism for the federal government to support significant improvements to health services for all Canadians while enabling provinces and territories to address their diverse needs and priorities. For the past 2 years, premiers have consistently called on the federal government to increase its share of provincial-territorial health-care costs through the CHT from 22% to 35% and to maintain it at this level over time.

---

## **International**

### ***US: APhA House of Delegates calls for removal of barriers to access to pharmacist-provided patient-care services***

The House of Delegates of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) passed policy in order to break down barriers that stand in the way of patients' ability to receive optimal and accessible care through pharmacists. In a [statement](#), APhA called on the American Medical Association (AMA) to join dozens of other health-care organizations that recognize and support pharmacists providing essential patient care such as testing and immunization, which has been and will continue to be important throughout this pandemic and beyond. "For decades, pharmacists have been working with federal and state policymakers to allow pharmacists to initiate medications when patients can be assessed for appropriate use. Unfortunately, AMA and other professional organizations consistently oppose all federal and state legislative and regulatory attempts to

enhance pharmacists' scope of practice and eligibility as providers for Medicare patients," the statement says. "It is time to collectively address health equity challenges and let go of antiquated models that present barriers to care for many Americans."

### ***UK: RPS calls for mandatory reporting of workforce disability data***

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is [calling for](#) mandatory reporting of workforce disability data to create more inclusive practices in the workplace. RPS believes the reporting of such data is key to tackling the disability employment gap and will also show the levels of recruitment and retention of staff, highlighting whether or not people with a disability are being recruited and feel like they can apply for roles. "Embedding disability workforce reporting is an indication to people that their workplace is supportive and wants to take steps in becoming more inclusive," said Aman Doll, the head of professional belonging at RPS. "A mandatory approach will encourage all organizations to have a strategy to collect disability data, especially those that don't proactively engage with inclusion and diversity."

---

## **In Depth**

### ***What can you do to be antiracist?***

University of Waterloo Alumnus Mohamed El Sheikh [shares his experiences](#) as a Sudanese-Canadian pharmacist. Born in Sudan, El Sheikh came to Canada with his family as a boy and has lived across the country and in the US. He graduated from the School of Pharmacy in 2020 and advocates for antiracism in health-care education and practice.

### ***Do you need a fourth dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?***

In clinical trials, multiple leading COVID-19 vaccines were tested as a 2-shot regimen. In the real world, 3 doses have proven to offer strong protection against serious illness. And now, in multiple countries, fourth doses are being explored as a way to ward off waning immunity. So, does that mean you should rush out and get another shot if the opportunity arises? Not necessarily, experts say in this [CBC analysis](#).

---

## **Worth Repeating**

"Working in health care, you encounter a lot of challenges. It's not an easy career, but being able to step up and be aligned with the common goal of providing the best patient care possible to those at most risk is rewarding." –Altum Health Clinic Pharmacist, Brian Poon, [who was among a group](#) of University Health Network (UHN) pharmacists deployed to UHN's Connected COVID Care Clinic, a pathway dedicated to caring for patients with COVID-19 infection

---

This weekly update is compiled by the Canadian Pharmacists Association. 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

Canadian Pharmacists Association  
1785 Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa, ON K1G 3Y6  
[Unsubscribe](#) | [Contact Us](#)

