



Canadian  
Pharmacists  
Association

Association des  
pharmaciens  
du Canada

# The Weekly

Bringing the world of pharmacy together

**May 3, 2023**

**CPhA**

***Nitroglycerin spray shortage update: Information for pharmacy professionals***

A Tier 3 shortage was declared in late February for nitroglycerin spray due to raw material supply issues for the predominant manufacturer (Mylan) and subsequent increase in demand for other marketed products (Sandoz and Sanofi). The shortage now also applies to nitroglycerin sublingual tablets in 0.3 mg and 0.6 mg strengths due to the increase in demand for these products. CPhA has updated its [resource page](#) on the shortage to include updated information on products impacted, estimated resupply dates and details on the use of expired products. The availability of nitroglycerin spray and tablets is expected to be extremely limited for the next few months and we continue to recommend that pharmacists across Canada limit the dispensing of these products where possible to help extend inventory and ensure patients can access this medication.

***Infant formula shortage update: Information for pharmacy professionals***

Canada continues to experience disruptions in the supply of certain types of infant formula. While the critical shortage of hypoallergenic formula has largely

subsided, the supply of regular formula has been strained since last fall. This is particularly impacting powdered and lower-cost store-brand formats. CPhA continues to participate in stakeholder meetings convened by Health Canada. We recently updated our [resource page](#) to add a range of information to help pharmacists support parents and caregivers in navigating the shortage, including printable fact sheets for families, important labelling information, a list of new products that will be imported in the coming months and other helpful materials.

### ***Pharmacy Wellness Toolkit***

CPhA's Pharmacy Wellness Task Force is curating a set of evidence-based resources to support wellness within the pharmacy profession. The task force has evaluated the Canadian Health Workforce Network's catalog of 140 wellness interventions and is pleased to share an initial curated selection of resources for individuals in a new [Wellness Toolkit](#). Over the coming weeks and months, the toolkit will expand to include resources relevant to pharmacy teams, organizations and system leadership. To kick-off Mental Health Week, which runs from May 1 to 7, pharmacist and Pharmacy Wellness Task Force member Katrina Mulherin participated in a Canadian Health Workforce Network [webinar](#) to discuss health worker mental health.

### ***IPPC Indigenous Pharmacy Scholarship: Deadline extended to June 15***

The deadline to apply for the Indigenous Pharmacy Professionals of Canada's Indigenous Pharmacy Scholarship has been extended to June 15. With both PharmD and technician scholarships available for the 2023/2024 academic year, this funding will help reduce financial barriers for Indigenous students interested in pursuing a career in pharmacy. Thank you to our founding sponsors, Johnson & Johnson, Shoppers Drug Mart, Green Shield Canada and Sobeys National Pharmacy Group, for their generous support of the IPPC Indigenous Pharmacy Scholarship. [Apply now](#).

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## **Pharmacy on the front lines**

***Digby, NS, pharmacy added to community primary care clinic program***

Balser's PharmaChoice in Digby is 1 of 14 new locations in Nova Scotia added to the Community Pharmacy Primary Care Clinic program. Under the pilot program, pharmacists have dedicated time to see patients with common illnesses and people who are on medications for chronic diseases like diabetes, and cardiovascular and lung disease. They can also provide care for strep throat, including testing, diagnosis and treatment—something that has not been available previously through pharmacies. Pharmacies in Shelburne and Yarmouth counties were among the first 12 community pharmacy primary care clinics launched in February. "Our team has been successfully operating our Community Pharmacy Primary Care Clinic since February 1 with an overwhelmingly positive response from the community, our patients and our healthcare colleagues," Colleen MacInnis, pharmacist and owner of TLC Pharmasave in Shelburne, [told SaltWire](#). At City Drug PharmaChoice in Yarmouth, the program is also going well. "There's been quite a lot of interest, quite a lot of uptake. Some people don't know what our scope of practice is so we've gotten a lot of inquiries for things we may not be able to do, but that's a learning curve for the community," said pharmacist Darlene Mooney.

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## Provincial

### ***14 additional primary care clinics to open in NS pharmacies***

Nova Scotia is expanding a program that enables pharmacists to treat and prescribe medication to patients with common illnesses or certain chronic diseases, like diabetes, [CTV News reports](#). The provincial government announced on April 26 that its Pharmacy Primary Care Clinic program will expand from 12 to 26 locations in May. The province said 9 new locations opened May 1 and the other 5 will open by the end of the month. "Pharmacists live and work in our communities and are one of the most accessible healthcare providers in Nova Scotia," Brian Comer, minister responsible for the Office of Addictions and Mental Health, said in a news release on behalf of Nova Scotia Health Minister Michelle Thompson. The program is part of the province's efforts to ensure residents have access to primary care even if they don't have a doctor. The first 12 primary care clinics opened in February. The province said the clinics have provided more than 9000 services to more than 5000 Nova Scotians since then. "For me, the proof of this model is in the daily interactions I have with patients who otherwise would be in emergency rooms, or worse, not attending to their health needs at all," said Colleen MacInnis,

pharmacist and owner of TLC Pharmasave in Shelburne. “I am full of pride and inspiration watching our team and our colleagues at other sites providing this necessary care in our communities.”

### ***Mpox vaccine now available at some NS pharmacies***

Those who are eligible for the pre-exposure vaccination against mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, can access the vaccine at participating physician offices and pharmacies across Nova Scotia, [CTV News reports](#). Appointments at community pharmacy primary care clinics became available on May 1, and patients can find more information and [book appointments online](#). “By offering the vaccine in physician offices and the community pharmacy primary care clinics, we are providing more equitable access to those at highest risk of infection,” said Dr. Jesse Kancir, medical officer of health responsible for mpox. “While we do not have any known cases of mpox in the community, I’m encouraging everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated. The vaccine Imvamune is recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization to be used as a prevention measure for those at the highest risk of infection and comes in 2 doses, which are spread out by at least 28 days.

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## **National**

### ***Ottawa resumes long-running battle over prescription drug prices***

Industries affected by Ottawa’s drug price reform are hoping the turmoil will end soon, as a parliamentary committee continues its investigation this week, [the Globe and Mail reports](#). The Liberal government announced changes to federal rules on drug pricing in 2017 to try to push prices lower, but no new rules have come into force because of opposition and a series of court challenges. Health Minister Jean-Yves Duclos wrote to the federal regulator—the Patented Medicines Prices Review Board—in November asking it to indefinitely halt new guidelines because of industry concerns and advising that a board member resigned in protest in February. The House of Commons health committee began hearings on April 27 to probe the matter and heard from Duclos and others. The pharmaceutical industry has argued that if the government restricts its revenue too much, it will be unprofitable to bring new

drugs to Canada. The pharmacy sector has also expressed its concern regarding the impact on pharmacy operations and services.

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## International

### ***FIP's new tool encourages countries to assess pharmacists' readiness for vaccination***

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is offering a new resource to help countries self-assess readiness of their regulations to enable pharmacist-delivered vaccination services and, where needed, to implement such regulations, [Pharmacy Business reports](#). Developed by FIP's Regulators Advisory Group, the "[Pharmacy-led vaccination services: Regulatory self-assessment implementation tool](#)" covers pharmacist-led roles related to vaccination from supply chain management to administration and prescribing. "This new resource from FIP is based on the experiences of professional regulators in countries where pharmacy-led vaccination has been successfully introduced and regulated. With it, we aim to support regulators, policymakers and national organizations in developing strategies or enabling regulatory frameworks in countries where the pharmacy workforce has a limited role in vaccination strategies so that it can contribute further to the global imperative of improving immunization coverage," said Brett Simmonds, group chair. The tool also aims to help countries identify strengths and areas for improvement in order to inform vaccination policy and planning efforts.

### ***Australia: Pharmacists to administer more vaccines in South Australia***

South Australian pharmacists are now able to administer 10 more vaccines, including those for chickenpox, measles, meningococcal and shingles, in what will be the most comprehensive program in Australia, [the Australian Associated Press reports](#). The state government said the changes will further ease the pressure on general practitioner (GP) services. "We want to do what's within our power as a state government to lessen the load on our incredibly burdened GPs," health minister Chris Picton said. "This is one simple measure to do just that, with pharmacists as trusted health professionals ready and willing to step in to provide these services." Under the new scheme, which came into effect on April 28, pharmacists will be able to administer vaccines for a range of diseases including Japanese encephalitis virus, hepatitis A and B, and the

human papillomavirus. They will also continue to provide vaccines for seasonal influenza and COVID-19. The new code follows a review by SA Health's chief pharmacist and the Public Health Division, which included consultation with key stakeholders.

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## In Depth

### ***Too many Canadian teens are vaping***

With Australia looking at a ban on vaping without a doctor's prescription and many provinces prohibiting flavoured vapes, experts say Health Canada needs to do more to stop kids from vaping. The rate of teen vaping in Canada is more than 8 times that of adults. [CBC looks at the issue](#).

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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 organizations and sources.

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