



Canadian  
Pharmacists  
Association  
Association des  
pharmaciens  
du Canada

# The Weekly

Bringing the world of pharmacy together

**November 17, 2021**

## **CPhA**

### ***Upcoming webinar: Motivational interviewing for improving adherence and outcomes***

The rate of nonadherence to medication regimens—a multi-billion-dollar problem—has not changed in 40 years, and the current persuasive and paternalistic ways of talking with patients are often ineffective. Join speaker Bruce A. Berger on November 23 from 2:00–3:00 pm ET to learn about motivational interviewing—an evidence-based approach to improving treatment adherence by looking at patient health behaviours and outcomes. *The content has been developed by the speaker and is not accredited.* [Register now.](#)

### ***In case you missed it: CPhA welcomes Danielle Paes as Chief Pharmacist Officer***

CPhA is thrilled to welcome Dr. Danielle Paes to the role of Chief Pharmacist Officer—a new, full-time senior management position that will provide leadership and guidance on issues facing pharmacy and health care in Canada. As CPO, Danielle will spearhead a range of CPhA's strategic priorities, with particular emphasis on enhancing engagement with pharmacists across the country, mental health and well-being, and developing a vision for the future of pharmacy. [Read the official announcement](#) for more information about Danielle and her role as CPO, and follow her on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) @CdnPharmChief.

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## **Pharmacists on the front line**

***N.S. pharmacist on giving pediatric doses of COVID-19 vaccine and the art of distraction***

Pharmacists in Nova Scotia are gearing up to inoculate thousands of children aged 5 through 11 against COVID-19 once Health Canada gives the green light to Pfizer for its pediatric doses. In addition to making sure they have the supplies and staff necessary, they're also preparing to vaccinate a group that might need more patience while receiving their shots, [Global News reports](#). "We've been anticipating that [they] might take a little bit more time with each of the kids, so you're seeing longer intervals and spacing for the vaccine [appointments]," said Diane Harpell, the chair of the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia's board and owner of the Medicine Shoppe in Dartmouth. The key, Harpell said, is the art of distraction. At her pharmacy, for example, staff have already been discussing ways to make the experience fun for kids coming in. She said parents will often bring their phones or a tablet to put on a show for their kids to watch. "But ultimately, sometimes it's just trying to make sure we get this done quick, get it over with, so there's not a lot of time spent going back and forth on the kids being dramatic and being scared and stuff," Harpell said.

### ***Health-care providers in rural Ontario adding extra measures to ensure staff safety***

Kristen Watt, the owner of Kristen's Pharmacy in Southampton, Ontario, has a strong social media presence vocalizing her support for vaccines and public health measures. However, she [told CBC](#) that it's her staff who have to deal with the brunt of the abuse through intimidating phone calls and letters. "My poor staff are at the mercy of what I say on the Internet, they're just innocent people trying to do their jobs," she said. To tackle this issue, Watt has added extra security measures at her pharmacy. These include panic buttons, more security cameras and a glass break-in security system, which notifies authorities immediately if windows are broken into. "The cost is not insignificant but it's necessary in order to prevent burnout," Watt said. She added that the pandemic has added a moral injury to those in the medical profession, due to the increased workload and stress. "I always say 'I just can't people anymore' these days, it's been a long haul for us," she said. Watt suspects that as vaccinations roll out for kids under 12, the abuse might increase.

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## **Provincial**

### ***Ontario to allow people with COVID-19 symptoms to get tested at pharmacies***

The Ontario government is looking to expand its COVID-19 testing in pharmacies to include symptomatic individuals, according to a memo obtained from a Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacist, [Global News reports](#). Currently, only those people who show no symptoms of COVID-19 are allowed to walk into pharmacies to take a rapid antigen test. "The Ministry of Health is expanding COVID-19 diagnostic testing options for Ontarians to ensure that anyone who needs a test can get one and get their results as quickly as possible," the memo says. A government source confirmed to Global News the changes allowing symptomatic COVID-19 testing at pharmacies that want to opt-in will occur across the province.

### ***High-dose flu shot supply issues leaving some Alberta pharmacies high and dry***

Calgary pharmacist Nasreen Bandali [told CTV News](#) the pharmacy she works at ordered 100

doses of a high-dose flu vaccine to meet demand during this year's flu season, but instead, her location received just 20 doses and has been told they won't be getting any more. "We probably had about 90 people sign up for appointment slots that we then had to cancel," said Bandali, the pharmacy operations manager at Kenron Pharmacy. In a statement to CTV News, Alberta Health said the province ordered and received about 400 000 doses of the Fluzone high-dose shot—enough to immunize 68% of people 65 and older in the province. Most of the vaccines were sent to pharmacy wholesale distributors and distributed based on demand and inventory, the statement says. But that's left some pharmacy locations in the province receiving much lower supply than what is needed. CTV News spoke to pharmacists in Airdrie, Didsbury and High River who all said they've had to turn away seniors who want the high-dose shot because they don't have enough supply or the shipment has been delayed.

### ***Manitoba pharmacists caught off guard by newest provincial health order***

Pharmacists Manitoba says it was unaware pharmacists would be needed to provide rapid COVID-19 tests for youth next month, prior to health officials' announcement Friday, [according to Global News](#). Furthermore, the organization says pharmacists aren't yet permitted to do so. "At this point, pharmacists in Manitoba are only able to administer and interpret tests for travel purposes," said Pharmacists Manitoba President Ashley Hart. "So there does need to be some changes made to the ministerial order that allowed us to do this, to expand it to include the new age group and purpose." On November 12, Manitoba's chief provincial public health officer, Dr. Brent Roussin, announced those aged 12 to 17 will need to provide proof of at least one vaccine or a recent negative test to take part in indoor recreational sports, starting December 6. Roussin said the testing will need to be done at participating pharmacies and won't be allowed through free provincial test sites. "We weren't consulted, unfortunately, before the news release was made, however we've been in contact with Manitoba Health and government since," Hart said.

### ***U of S study reveals factors behind vaccine resistance in Saskatchewan***

Even though Saskatchewan's vaccine rollout began nearly 9 months ago, Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine, a professor of community health and epidemiology at the University of Saskatchewan, thinks a study on vaccine resistance will help with the next phase for children under 12, [the Saskatoon StarPhoenix reports](#). Muhajarine and a team of researchers tracked COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy and refusal over nearly a year, starting in the spring of 2020. The study found that less than a quarter of respondents expressed either hesitancy or opposition to vaccination, and factors that contributed to this resistance included lower levels of education, financial insecurity and Indigenous status. The researchers found a lack of concern about the pandemic among the vaccine hesitant, and the 11% who said they did not plan to get vaccinated were also found to be less likely to wear masks or maintain distancing to prevent the spread of the virus. Saskatchewan sits near the bottom in vaccination rates in Canada, well behind the national vaccination rate, with about 80% of eligible residents fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

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## **National**

### ***Health Canada could authorize vaccine for kids 5 to 11 in '1 to 2 weeks'***

Health Canada says a decision on whether to authorize a COVID-19 vaccine for children will come “in the next 1 to 2 weeks,” leaving open the possibility that some kids could be at least partially protected by Christmas, [according to the Canadian Press](#). The news comes as parts of Canada see an uptick in COVID-19 cases in the weeks leading up to the holiday season. Canada’s Chief Medical Advisor, Dr. Supriya Sharma, said in a conference call with reporters on November 12 that the regulator is “actively continuing” its review of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children aged 5 to 11, which was authorized for use in the United States earlier this month. Authorization within the next 2 weeks could give kids access to a first jab—and potentially a second—by Christmas, provided Canada receives supply of the smaller, kid-specific doses right away and that provinces can roll out the vaccine swiftly. The federal government announced last month it would receive 2.9 million Pfizer-BioNTech doses for children shortly after approval.

### ***‘Under attack’: Canadian health-care workers call for more protection from harassment and threats***

Antisemitism, racism, misogyny, unfounded character assassinations, and disturbing threats of physical violence and even death are just some of the daily hate-filled messages sent to Canadian front-line health-care workers, public health advocates, academics and experts speaking out on the benefit of COVID-19 vaccines and against misinformation, [according to CBC](#). When protesters stormed Canadian hospitals this summer to berate health-care workers and oppose vaccine mandates and other public health restrictions, widespread condemnation from politicians and the public was swift. But a disturbing rise in aggressive online harassment of health-care workers across Canada has been largely met with inaction, prompting calls for governments, regulators and social media companies to do more to protect those on the front line. Dr. Nili Kaplan-Myrth, a family physician in Ottawa, says she and her colleagues feel “under attack” and unprotected, even though they’ve worked hard to protect those in the community they serve by promoting public health guidance and administering COVID-19 vaccines.

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## **International**

### ***UK: Scotland’s ‘fantastic’ Pharmacy First service to expand after hitting 2 million consultations***

The Scottish government has unveiled plans to further expand the range of common clinical conditions treated under the National Health Service (NHS) Pharmacy First service, as pharmacists have completed 2 million consultations under the scheme since its launch last year, [Chemist+Druggist reports](#). Under the scheme, pharmacists at the over 1200 participating pharmacies offer free advice, treatment or supply of medicines “for minor illnesses,” supported by national patient group directions. “Since its launch at the height of the pandemic, only 4% of patients needed to be referred on to another healthcare professional, such as a GP or hospital unit,” the government wrote in a statement. Pharmacists in the network have taken on more than 200 000 appointments in the last year that would otherwise have gone to general practitioners or hospital emergency departments, the statement said. “Community pharmacists are playing a fantastic role in ensuring that millions of people have their minor ailment needs addressed

quickly, without needing to go to a GP or hospital,” said Scottish Health Secretary Humza Yousef.

### ***US: Walgreens pharmacies are closing early around the country due to staff shortages***

Some Walgreens pharmacies across the US, including locations in Iowa, Idaho, Colorado, Indiana and Kentucky, have shortened hours because they lack staff, [according to Business Insider](#). “We’re facing unprecedented times in healthcare in general, and in the pharmacy profession, it’s no different,” said Emily Zadvorny, executive director of the Colorado Pharmacists Society. “There’s a lot of stress on our healthcare professionals. We’re seeing shortages of healthcare professionals across the board, and again, the same in pharmacy.” Some pharmacists report being burnt out as they are asked to work longer hours and take on new duties, including giving COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. “We are grateful to our trusted team members who have shown exceptional dedication throughout the pandemic,” said Fraser Engerman, senior director of external relations at Walgreens. In September, the chain announced incentives to hire even more workers, including bonuses to full-time and part-time pharmacist hires and pharmacy technicians who become certified to administer COVID-19 vaccines.

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## **In-Depth**

### ***Austria targets unvaccinated with new COVID-19 lockdown***

As Europe once again becomes the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic, Austria is taking a bold step to quash infections. The western European nation has imposed a lockdown—a measure many Canadians are familiar with—but with a twist: this lockdown is only for the unvaccinated. [Global News explains why](#).

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## **Worth Repeating**

“Why are the same parents who want to protect their beloved babies against measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough and more—conditions we rarely see any more, thanks to vaccination—so reluctant to protect them against the in-our-face coronavirus?” – the *Globe and Mail* columnist André Picard [argues](#) parents should embrace childhood COVID-19 vaccination as a pathway out of the pandemic

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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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