

View in [browser](#) / Afficher dans le navigateur [Web](#)



Canadian
Pharmacists
Association
Association des
pharmaciens
du Canada

The Weekly

Bringing the world of pharmacy together

October 20, 2021

CPhA

CPhA launches tools and resources to help pharmacists this flu season

Pharmacists play a vital public health role, administering nearly half of all flu shots delivered across Canada each year. According to a [national survey](#) commissioned by CPhA ahead of this flu season, the increased demand for flu shots experienced last year is expected to continue and pharmacies will still be the most likely place for immunization. To help pharmacists safely and effectively provide influenza immunizations to patients, our [influenza webpage](#) is being updated regularly with tools and resources. These resources include [suggested operational best practices](#) for community pharmacy, a [fact sheet](#) to help prepare patients for their visit to the pharmacy, and [answers to common questions](#) about the flu shot. The webpage and resources are also available in [French](#).

Pharmacists on the front line

Pharmacy professor uses personal stories to guide future pharmacists, break down barriers for LGBT2SQ+ people

A man who grew up in Saskatoon has travelled the world working in the pharmacy field. Now he's back in Canada with a clear mission to make health care accessible to people with diverse sexual and gender identities. [CBC's Saskatoon Morning](#) spoke with Kyle Wilby, an associate professor in Dalhousie University's College of Pharmacy, about how pharmacy can provide a

more inclusive, welcoming and safe space for LGBT2SQ+ people. To help pharmacy professionals better provide inclusive health care to the LGBT2SQ+ community, CPhA has [updated resources](#) from our 2019 webinar, Smashing Stigma: LGBT2SQ+ Engagement in Pharmacy Practice.

Provincial

Vaccine mandate ordered for all registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in BC

The College of Pharmacists of British Columbia has ordered that all registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians will have to be fully vaccinated, have received at least 1 dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine, or have an exemption to continue working, [Canada.com reports](#). The college said its statement is based on [an order](#) late last week by Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry. The requirements also apply to pharmacy and pharmacy technician students who are in care locations for training or research purposes. Chris Chiew, the general manager of pharmacy at London Drugs, said the company made it clear in late August that all employees across the chain's 80 stores would be required to be fully vaccinated by November 1. "We have maybe a handful of people who have actually shown or stated some resistance to [the rolling out of our policy]," he said. "But we've been able to talk with them and we've had [2 months] to try to help them work through their issues and make sure we answer the questions and come up with alternatives for them, if needed."

BC pharmacies doling out Moderna and Pfizer in pilot project just before younger kids expected to be okayed for vaccine

Dozens of pharmacies in BC are delivering mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, yet still don't know if they will be part of the immunization plan when it comes to kids aged 5 to 11, [CTV reports](#). Several Northern BC pharmacies have been able to distribute the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines since late August, and in the Lower Mainland, 54 pharmacies are doing the same as part of a pilot project. According to the Ministry of Health, they're delivering 4 000 doses per week, on average. But it's still unclear whether pharmacies will be part of the vaccine rollout for kids aged 5 to 11 who are expected to get the green light for a jab next month. Pharmacists did provide the AstraZeneca vaccines, but BC has so far resisted a wide-scale approach involving pharmacies. "We are in discussions with the government on planning for mRNA vaccines in BC pharmacies and what it will take to roll out on a large-scale basis," said Angie Gaddy, communications director for the BC Pharmacy Association.

Manitoba pharmacists can now perform rapid COVID-19 tests for travellers

Manitoba pharmacists can now perform rapid COVID-19 tests for people travelling outside the province, the provincial government announced on October 18, [according to CBC](#). "We are pleased that we are now able to offer rapid testing, similar to that of other provinces across the country," said Ashley Hart, the president of Pharmacists Manitoba. "Rapid testing in pharmacies is another small step towards bringing Manitoba in line with the advanced pharmacy practices seen across Canada," she said. Travellers must go to the pharmacist with documentation of their

travel plans, such as a plane or train ticket or hotel booking. They must pay for the tests, because travel health-related services aren't covered under the *Canada Health Act*. The fees will be set by the pharmacies providing the service. The pharmacies can perform rapid antigen tests and rapid molecular (non-PCR) tests. Pharmacies are responsible for acquiring the testing supplies, training staff and advertising at the site.

Manitoba pharmacists prescribing 'nature' to connect patients to the great outdoors

Pharmacists Manitoba recently endorsed Park Prescriptions, or PaRx, a program that aims to improve patient health by connecting people to the great outdoors, [according to the Canadian Healthcare Network](#). And it's not simply giving friendly advice. Research behind the program suggests written prescriptions are more effective in getting people to make a lifestyle change compared to advice given orally. Pharmacists and other licensed health care professionals in Manitoba can now register with PaRx to provide nature prescriptions. When they register, they receive a nature prescription file with a unique provider code. There are instructions on how to prescribe and log prescriptions, as well as online resources with prescribing tips. The BC Parks Foundation offers free guided remote nature therapy sessions to prescribers. Pharmacists Manitoba tweeted it's proud to support the launch of PaRx in Manitoba, the first Canadian pharmacy association to endorse the program.

Windows at Cambridge, ON, pharmacy smashed by rocks with anti-vaccination messages

Police are investigating after businesses in Cambridge, Ontario, including a pharmacy, reported having rocks with anti-vaccination messaging on them thrown at and through their windows. Cambridge Medical Pharmacy posted photos on Facebook showing rocks that had been thrown through its window. Pharmacist and owner Nimmit Vyas [told CBC](#) no one was in the business at the time. He noticed the window was broken when he went to open the blinds on the pharmacy's front window. After reviewing video surveillance footage, Vyas said it appeared 2 rocks were thrown by a person on a bicycle. "I went outside . . . and I found a rock with a syringe drawn with a cross across it, and on the other side of the rock it said, 'eff you commies,'" he said, noting the F-word was spelled out. "All you're trying to do is help the community and vaccinate people as much as we can, and I understand people's frustration that they might not be too happy with the government's decision but doing property damage and vandalizing someone's property is not something anyone should do to show their frustration."

National

Pfizer officially submits application for COVID vaccine for kids aged 5 to 11 to Health Canada

Pfizer has officially applied for Canadian authorization for its kid-sized COVID-19 vaccine meant for those aged 5 to 11, bringing the country one step closer to protection for the school-aged population, [the Toronto Star reports](#). The news means that the final data from the drug manufacturer still needs to be vetted by experts from Health Canada, who will comb through the results of a trial done on thousands of child volunteers before signing off. The government isn't

starting from scratch, since Pfizer, which is working with German biotech company BioNTech, submitted a first look at its numbers at the beginning of the month. But the official submission means the ball is now in Health Canada's court. Health Canada confirmed it has received the submission for the vaccine, now known as Comirnaty, but does not have a timeline for a decision.

Survey: Half of Canadian parents ready to get their kids vaccinated against COVID-19

A new survey by the Angus Reid Institute shows that just over half of parents are ready to get their children vaccinated against COVID-19 when vaccines are approved for that age group, [Global News reports](#). According to the survey, 51% of Canadian parents with kids aged 5 to 11 are ready to have them immunized once a vaccine is approved for that age group. Nearly 23% of parents say they will not be vaccinating their children, while 18% say they will eventually get their kids immunized. The survey showed less hesitancy around child immunization in BC, Ontario and Atlantic Canada, with 15% of respondents in those provinces saying they would not vaccinate their children. Vaccine hesitancy was higher in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec, with closer to 30% saying they would forego vaccinations for their children.

Medical cannabis spending in Canada hits 5-year low in first half of 2021

Canadian spending on medical cannabis fell to a 5-year low in the first half of 2021, according to new data from Statistics Canada, as recreational cannabis reached record sales and more patients arranged to grow their own plants, [according to MJBizDaily](#). Patients in Canada spent \$242 million on medical cannabis in the first half of this year, down from \$294 million in the second half of 2020. Ken Weisbrod, the former head of cannabis strategy at Shoppers Drug Mart, said the proliferation of recreational cannabis stores is probably pulling some convenience- and value-seeking patients to the adult-use market. He said medical cannabis sales could be revived after licensed producers achieve standardization in manufacturing and complete successful trials in support of clinical outcomes. "What's really encouraging is that some companies are taking it a step further by looking to get a natural health product license, and at the highest level, a drug establishment license in Canada," Weisbrod said. "These companies will be able to start to support their products with [health] claims as they go down the study route."

McKinsey sued over alleged role in opioid epidemic in Canada

A class action lawsuit has been launched against global consulting firm McKinsey & Company for its role in fuelling the opioid epidemic in Canada, [according to a news release](#). The class action seeks damages for the alleged negligence of McKinsey, breaches of consumer protections statutes, conspiracy, health-care costs and unjust enrichment. Earlier this year, McKinsey & Company reached a roughly US\$596 million settlement with attorneys-general in multiple US states. The settlement was reached after McKinsey's extensive role in pushing the sale of OxyContin by Purdue Pharma L.P. was disclosed. Purdue has since filed for bankruptcy protection.

International

UK: RPS calls for self-care strategy

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is among the leading health-care bodies urging the government to implement a national self-care strategy as the National Health Service (NHS) seeks to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal is set out in a [new document](#) entitled “Realising the potential: Developing a blueprint for a self-care strategy for England,” which is backed jointly by RPS and other health-care organizations. The blueprint says pharmacy should be integrated more fully into the health system in order to encourage and support self-care. “Pharmacists have a vital role to play in supporting people to self-care by enhancing access, choice and information for those wanting to care for themselves or their families,” Paul Bennett, RPS CEO, said. “This strategy aims to integrate the promotion of everyday wellbeing and the management of self-treatable and long-term conditions into the wider health system.”

Australia: Pharmacy Guild slams decision to block contraceptive pill being sold over the counter

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia says an interim decision by the country’s medical regulator to block the contraceptive pill being sold over the counter at pharmacies is “patronizing,” but the move has been welcomed by the Australian Medical Association (AMA), [Australian Broadcast News reports](#). Natalie Willis, national councillor for the Pharmacy Guild, said allowing pharmacies to sell the pill in certain situations would take the pressure off general practitioners and increase its accessibility for women. Willis also described the decision as “a tad insulting” to women and pharmacists. “It’s saying that women are not intelligent or informed enough to make these decisions on their own behalf and ask questions where they need to,” she said. “And it’s saying the same thing about pharmacists, that we’re not appropriately trained and qualified to be able to ask and answer those questions ourselves, to make sure a medication is appropriate to someone we’re supplying it to.” The AMA argues pharmacists are not the right people and pharmacies are not the right place to be giving women advice on the pill.

Ireland: Failure to use pharmacies in COVID-19 booster program a major oversight

The Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) [has criticized](#) the failure by Minister of Health Stephen Donnelly and Ireland’s Health Services to include pharmacies in the delivery of COVID-19 booster vaccinations. With reports suggesting booster vaccines are due to start in early November, the IPU has said it is a major and inexplicable oversight that pharmacies are not included. “While we welcome that the booster vaccine program will commence shortly, we believe it is a major mistake not to include pharmacies in the program,” said Darragh O’Loughlin, secretary general of the IPU. “Involving pharmacies is particularly important given the extreme concerns being expressed by GPs about their capacity. GPs are, by their own admission, already heavily overstretched. By excluding pharmacies from the COVID booster program, they are needlessly compounding this GP capacity problem.”

US: FDA to allow ‘mix and match’ approach for COVID-19 booster shots

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is planning to allow Americans to receive a different COVID-19 vaccine as a booster than the one they initially received, a move that could reduce the appeal of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and provide flexibility to doctors and other vaccinators, [according to the New York Times](#). The government would not recommend one shot over another, and it might note that using the same vaccine as a booster when possible is preferable, people familiar with the agency's planning said. But vaccine providers could use their discretion to offer a different brand, a freedom that state health officials have been requesting for weeks. The approach was foreshadowed last week, when researchers presented the findings of a federally funded "mix and match" study to an expert committee that advises the FDA. The study found that recipients of Johnson & Johnson's single-dose shot who received a Moderna booster saw their antibody levels rise 76-fold in 15 days, compared with only a 4-fold increase after an extra dose of Johnson & Johnson.

In-Depth

Here's why aerosol transmission of COVID-19 matters to us all

Eighteen months into the pandemic, we continue to learn about COVID-19 transmission. In [a column for the Ottawa Citizen](#), Raywat Deonandan, an epidemiologist and University of Ottawa professor, says it's becoming clear that so-called aerosol transmission is an important and overlooked infectious route.

Worth Repeating

"Be kind to your #CommunityPharmacist they're running on cold coffee and a handful of almonds." — [Tweet](#) from Ottawa pharmacist Lindsay Edwards (@winnco85) describing a typical day during COVID-19 and flu season.

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.