



Canadian
Pharmacists
Association
Association des
pharmaciens
du Canada

The Weekly

Bringing the world of pharmacy together

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CPhA

CPhA survey: High demand for flu shots expected to continue this season

According to a [new national survey](#) commissioned by CPhA and conducted by Abacus Data, the increased demand for flu shots will continue this season, as 56% of Canadians say they intend to get one. The lack of flu spread last year does not appear to be reducing demand, and the pandemic continues to increase the likelihood of Canadians getting vaccinated against the flu. Last year, pharmacy teams administered more than half of the flu shots delivered across the country. As Canadians increasingly turn to their pharmacists for health-care services during the pandemic, pharmacy will be faced with another extremely busy flu season. According to the survey, 56% of Canadians who intend to get a flu shot this year said they will get it at the pharmacy, up from 54% who said they got it at a pharmacy last year. With an expected increase in demand for flu shots at the pharmacy—over and above the record demand we saw last season—CPhA is urging all governments to allocate enough supply to pharmacies.

CPhA to celebrate pharmacists on World Pharmacists Day

On Saturday, September 25, join CPhA and the global pharmacy community in celebrating and showing appreciation for you and the 45 000 pharmacists across the country who continue to play a critical role in keeping our communities safe! Whether you're spending the day at the pharmacy, at home, in the office or elsewhere, show us your #PharmacyLifeCA. Share your World Pharmacists Day photos on social media tagging us and using the hashtag #WPD2021.

Images of pharmacy practice: Portraying pharmacists as health-care professionals

An analysis of images posted on Twitter for World Pharmacists Day (WPD) 2020 in the September/October issue of [the Canadian Pharmacists Journal \(CPJ\)](#) shows pharmacists are often depicted as dispensers of medication, rather than health professionals who provide patient care. The article concludes the profession must take advantage of WPD—a day intended to promote and advocate the pharmacy profession—and showcase the full scope of pharmacy practice. Ahead of WPD 2021, the authors have put together [a bank of images](#) that capture pharmacists as frontline clinicians and medications experts. The project aims to accurately portray modern pharmacy practice to challenge and correct the stereotype of pharmacists as pill dispensers.

Webinar recording available for COVID Conversations: Virulent variants, booster vaccines and the next phase in the COVID-19 pandemic

The emergence of new variants of concern has heralded a new phase in the COVID-19 pandemic. On September 13, our panel of experts discussed the current evidence around vaccines, highlighting the role that pharmacists and other health-care providers play in helping manage a fourth wave. We talked about particularly vulnerable patient populations for whom a third vaccine dose is appropriate as well as special considerations for vaccinating our young patients. As the fall is the time to think about influenza and pneumococcus immunization, we also discussed how pharmacists can support their patients to ensure they are protected. The webinar recording can be viewed [here](#).

Pharmacy on the frontline

Pharmacies busy after Alberta introduces vaccine certificate

Shivali Sharma, a pharmacist who owns 2 Shoppers Drug Marts in Edmonton, said people seeking walk-in vaccinations were lined up outside her south Edmonton store after the province announced its version of a vaccine certificate, [according to CBC](#). Normally, staff at the pharmacy handle about 5 to 10 walk-in appointments each day. On September 16, they administered 60 injections—an “extremely large proportion” of which were first doses, she said. “That announcement was the push that we needed to get those fence-sitters, those that were potentially a little bit hesitant about getting the vaccine. . . to come in and get that first dose done and start their series,” Sharma said.

Provincial

High influenza cases and COVID-19 too much of a risk, Calgary pharmacist says

While the Alberta government is working to emphasize the vital importance of COVID-19 vaccination, health-care workers are getting ready for the return of another seasonal flu campaign. Pharmacists in Calgary, like Brian Jones, who works for Shoppers Drug Mart, [told CTV](#) he hopes people will do the right thing and get their seasonal flu vaccine. Now that people

are out and about, attending events and meeting with friends, Jones says the risk for spreading influenza and COVID-19 is much higher: “My worry is that people do end up in ICU, people do end up in hospital with flu—we can’t afford to have that happen. Not only for our health care system, but for ourselves. If there’s no room in the ICU now, how is there going to be more room if we start getting flu?”

New Manitoba program to have pharmacists, doctors encourage COVID-19 vaccinations

The Manitoba government is investing \$14 million in community-focused and one-on-one outreach programs to improve access to the COVID-19 vaccine and to boost vaccine uptake, [according to CTV](#). “Every vaccination matters. Everyone is important, and there are many more that have to be done,” said Premier Kelvin Goertzen. “Doctors, physicians, pharmacists, these are the people that have earned the trust of Manitobans in many different ways and for many different reasons,” the premier said. The province is also supporting the creation of a training and support program for doctors and pharmacists that deals with best practices when it comes to reaching out to those who have yet to be vaccinated. “Pharmacists are an integral part of a community-based collaborative health strategy and we look forward to being involved in efforts to reduce barriers and save lives through this grassroots initiative to increase vaccination uptake,” Ashley Hart, the president of Pharmacists Manitoba, said [in a government news release](#).

New Brunswick pharmacies see increase in new vaccine appointments

New Brunswick pharmacies are seeing a renewed and increased demand for vaccination appointments, [CBC reports](#). Jake Reid, the executive director of the New Brunswick Pharmacists’ Association, said he’s heard from multiple pharmacies that demand has increased since the new vaccine requirement rules were announced. “One presumes this has to do with partly the new policy that the government has brought in to say that people will be limited in their participation in things like restaurants and gyms and cineplexes and so on,” he said. “And frankly, there’s still people that are seeking their first dose that just haven’t gotten around to it yet or many people who had been waiting to get their second dose.” Reid said over the past weeks, the 200 pharmacies that have vaccines have been administering on average a total of about 1000 shots per day.

National

Canadian children aged 5 to 11 could become eligible for COVID-19 vaccine next month

Millions of Canadian children could become eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccinations within weeks, bringing a glimmer of hope to families amid the pandemic’s fourth wave, [the Globe and Mail says](#). Pfizer said [in a news release](#) on September 20 that its mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine is safe and provides good protection against the virus among children aged 5 to 11. A spokesperson for Pfizer Canada said the company can give a rolling submission to Health Canada, which would allow the department to approve the vaccine as the company continues to collect and submit new safety and effectiveness data. While it’s difficult to predict when the vaccine will become available for the 5 to 11 age group, experts expect authorization fairly

quickly and suggest this could come as early as the end of October.

International

US: Amid labour shortage, Walgreens Boots offers bonuses, rewards for pharmacists

Walgreens Boots Alliance will give a one-time bonus of \$1,250 to its full-time pharmacists and a \$1,000 payment to part-time pharmacists, as major retailers try to retain people amid an intense labor shortage, [Reuters reports](#). The pharmacy chain said certified or to-be certified pharmacy technicians responsible for administering flu and COVID-19 vaccines will be given a \$1,000 reward throughout a 6-month retention period. The company said it is also providing an incentive of \$200 myWalgreens cash to any employee who gets fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by November 30. Walgreens said a majority of the staff have received their COVID-19 vaccinations and it is mandatory for support office team staff to be vaccinated or be enrolled in a regular testing program to comply with government regulation.

US: CVS Health to hire 25 000 ahead of flu season, COVID-19 boosters

CVS Health said on September 20 it will fill as many as 25 000 clinical and retail jobs ahead of the flu season and as the US prepares to administer booster COVID-19 vaccine shots, [according to Reuters](#). The company said most of the available jobs are for full-time, part-time, and temporary licensed pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and nurses, but it's also looking for employees to help manage its retail stores. CVS, Walgreens Boots Alliance and other pharmacies that plan to administer boosters are likely to see more traffic between November and January, putting them under increasing pressure to hire and retain employees. CVS said the virtual hiring campaign on September 24 will help it administer the extra shots, pending regulatory approval, as it continues to offer COVID-19 tests as well as vaccines to those who have not yet been immunized.

Ireland: Prescribing for minor ailments in pharmacy 'could free up a million GP appointments annually'

Pharmacists are stepping up their campaign to provide a minor ailments service, which they insist would eliminate the need to visit a GP for 40 conditions like hay fever, migraines and common skin conditions, [the Irish Independent reports](#). They say they are being underutilized despite providing a convenient and accessible service. Dermot Twomey, president of the Irish Pharmacy Union, said under a minor ailment service, medical card patients would access over-the-counter treatments free of charge and direct from their pharmacy. "Minor ailment schemes operate successfully in many other countries such as the UK, Netherlands, Canada and Australia. The experience in Scotland shows us it could eliminate 1 in 20 accident and emergency visits and 1 in 7 GP visits. With GPs consistently citing concerns over their capacity, at the stroke of a pen, the government could free up over a million GP appointments a year."

UK: RPS calls for free flu shots for pharmacists

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) [is calling on the National Health Service \(NHS\)](#) to offer

free flu shots for all pharmacists in England and Wales, following reports that pharmacy teams across primary care would not be given access to free vaccinations. Pharmacists have played a critical role in the COVID-19 vaccination program, as well as the delivery of flu vaccine, and will once again be on the frontline when administering the COVID-19 booster, according to the RPS press release. “It’s shocking that pharmacists in England and Wales, who have been on the frontline throughout this pandemic, are not eligible for free flu vaccinations to protect themselves and the public,” Claire Anderson, the RPS president said. “As we have seen over the past 18 months, pharmacists are not dispensable and we are therefore calling on the NHS to offer free flu vaccinations to pharmacists and pharmacy teams in both England and Wales, as is the case in Scotland.”

In-Depth

Why did Pfizer, Moderna COVID-19 vaccines get new names after approval? Experts explain

Months after emergency use approval, both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have been given their full stamp of approval by Health Canada—a stamp that comes with new names for the vaccines. In a tweet last week, the health agency announced the new names: Pfizer’s vaccine is now called “Comirnaty,” Moderna’s jab is “Spikevax,” and AstraZeneca’s shot is “Vaxzevria.” In [a Global News report](#), health experts discuss why this happened and what it means.

Worth Repeating

“For too long the health-care system has focused on the positive effects of adding medicines to a prescription, rather than acknowledging that this can also increase the risk of side effects and interactions between medicines, leading to poor health and costly unnecessary admissions to hospital. We need to focus on putting shared decision making between the prescriber and patient at the heart of prescribing, and look at the individual needs and circumstances of each person.” — Thorrun Govind, the chair of the RPS in England, [comments](#) on a [government report](#) into overprescribing led by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England, Dr. Keith Ridge

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