CPhA Drug Shortages and Recalls Survey 2018

NOVEMBER 2018
Overview:

- French and English surveys disseminated to pharmacists via CPhA and Provincial Pharmacy Association databases
- Survey open from Nov 14 to Dec 3, 2018 (20 days)
- 1,743 pharmacist responses

Responses by Province/Territory:

- Northwest Territories: 0.3%
- Newfoundland and Labrador: 1.1%
- Prince Edward Island: 1.7%
- Manitoba: 3.0%
- Nova Scotia: 4.5%
- New Brunswick: 5.1%
- British Columbia: 10.4%
- Saskatchewan: 12.0%
- Alberta: 17.5%
- Ontario: 17.6%
- Quebec: 26.8%
I work in the following practice setting:

- Chain: 24%
- Independent: 21%
- Hospital: 14%
- Franchise: 14%
- Banner: 14%
- Grocery: 7%
- Other (please specify): 2%
- Family Health Team / Primary Care Clinic: 2%
- Mass Merchandiser: 1%
In your experience, over the last 3-5 years, have drug shortages/recalls:

- **Drug Shortages**
  - Greatly increased: 79%
  - Somewhat increased: 16%
  - Not changed: 3%
  - Somewhat decreased: 0%
  - Greatly decreased: 1%

- **Drug Recalls**
  - Greatly increased: 45%
  - Somewhat increased: 24%
  - Not changed: 1%
  - Somewhat decreased: 1%
  - Greatly decreased: 1%
When shortages and recalls require action:

How often do drug shortages / recalls necessitate an intervention within your pharmacy practice (e.g. sourcing alternative supply, calling prescribers, etc.?)

- **Drug Shortages**
  - 45% Multiple times a day
  - 22% Daily
  - 13% Once every few days
  - 6% Once weekly
  - 7% Once monthly
  - 4% Once every few months
  - 2% I can’t recall

- **Drug Recalls**
  - 31% 2-3 times a week
  - 26% Once monthly
  - 13% Once every few months
  - 10% Once weekly
  - 5% Once every few days
  - 4% Daily
  - 4% I can’t recall
Pharmacists estimate that drug shortage management generally occupies between 1% and 20% of their time per shift.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of shift</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Which is less than... 
Dispensing activities
Prescription counseling
Drug therapy management

and more than...
Business management
Staff management
Immunizations, etc.
Time consuming drug shortage/recall activities identified by pharmacists:

**DRUG SHORTAGES**
- Alerting prescribers and discussing alternative medications
- Identifying alternative medications
- Calling other pharmacies to inquire about stock
- Calling suppliers/GPOs/Wholesalers to inquire about stock

**DRUG RECALLS**
- Contacting patients to notify them of a recall
- Calling manufacturers/GPOs to inquire about a recall or stock
- Alerting prescribers and discussing alternative medications
Therapeutic substitution:

Are you able to provide substitutes for shortage or recalled medicines?

- Yes, but only for drugs within the same therapeutic class. 28%
- Yes, I can prescribe any alternative drug independently, except for controlled drugs and substances. 16%
- Yes, but I must receive prior approval from the prescriber. 21%
- No. The prescriber must submit a new prescription for an alternative drug. 22%
- Yes, through a medical directive from the prescriber. 3%
- Other (please specify) 10%

**COMMENTS**

- Only in specific classes (ACEI, ARB, PPI, etc.) in B.C.
- Only for new Rx. Can’t substitute for refills.
- I can, but I prefer to contact the physician to let them prescribe an alternative.
- Yes, but patients often don’t want to pay for the service.
- All of the above. Each case is different.
Advance notice of drug shortages:

How often do you receive advance notice of a drug shortage?

- 32% Never
- 43% Infrequently
- 16% Sometimes
- 5% Frequently
- 1% Always
- 2% Unknown
**Informed about drug shortages/recalls:**

How do you typically find out about drug shortages/recalls? (respondents could choose all that applied)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Drug Shortages (%)</th>
<th>Drug Recalls (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other pharmacies</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found out on my own</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesaler/distributor</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPO</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal database/intranet</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial/national pharmacy association</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media/social media</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head office</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- “Found out on my own” could include Health Canada, drugshortages.ca, MedEffect
- “Manufacturer” could include drugshortages.ca
- Additional comments identified Health Canada, drugshortages.ca, MedEffect, colleges, pharmacy Facebook groups, only after we place an order
- Additional comments identified Health Canada alerts, patients, news.
Obtaining information about drug recalls:

Typically, how easy is it for you to obtain information about drug recalls?

- Very easy: 10% (Clinical Information), 10% (Information)
- Easy: 31% (Clinical Information), 31% (Information)
- Neither easy nor difficult: 33% (Clinical Information), 34% (Information)
- Difficult: 30% (Clinical Information), 30% (Information)
- Very difficult: 4% (Clinical Information), 4% (Information)
Satisfaction with notification methods:

Are you satisfied with how you are notified of drug shortages/recalls?

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Drug Shortages</th>
<th>Drug Recalls</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Canadian Pharmacists Association

Association des pharmaciens du Canada
Pharmacist stress associated with shortages:

Do drug shortages/recalls cause you stress?

- Yes: 96.1%
- No: 3.4%
- Unknown: 0.5%