



CANADIAN
PHARMACISTS
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION DES
PHARMACIENS
DU CANADA

December 2, 2019

Dear First Ministers

As you prepare to meet on Monday to discuss issues of national importance, the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) is looking for leadership from Canada's First Ministers on the implementation of pharmacare reforms in Canada.

Pharmacists are responsible for dispensing over 600 million prescriptions annually, safely and effectively, while also managing drug plans for their patients. Pharmacists see firsthand the concerning gaps in medication access across the country and we are committed to supporting a universal system where no Canadian is left behind. This is why we remain anxious about decisions being made that could cause undue disruptions to patient access when patients come to filling their prescriptions at their pharmacy counter.

As a next step, we recommend that the federal government work with provinces and territories to extend full coverage to Canadians by enhancing catastrophic drug coverage for those who currently face high out-of-pocket costs. This measure would provide much needed funding to provinces and territories, address some of the critical gaps that exist within the current system and provide immediate relief to patients.

As we work to improve drug access in Canada, pharmacists are also imploring Canada's First Ministers to acknowledge our growing drug supply crisis and commit to working collectively to resolve it. With an average of six new drug shortages reported each day to the Drug Shortages Canada database, the situation has reached a crisis point. U.S. plans to import Canadian medications will only exacerbate the problem; so too could expanded pharmacare programs if policy makers do not carefully consider their impact on the drug supply and build in the appropriate safeguards. Expanded drug coverage will not help Canadians if they cannot access the medications they need.

Pharmacists know and understand the issues affecting drug access and the security of our drug supply. We are on the frontline of these issues each and every day in every community across Canada. Through a new Pharm-Accord, and by building on the success of existing drug plans, extending this coverage to all Canadians and taking immediate action to protect the safety and security of the drug supply, we believe that we can deliver a sustainable promise of accessible and affordable medications for all.

Yours sincerely

Christine Hrudka, BSP, ICD.D
Chair

Glen Doucet
Chief Executive Officer

cc: The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.