



Top Considerations for Pharmacy Managers: Managing Emergency Pharmacy Closures

It is important for pharmacies to be prepared in the event of an emergency pharmacy closure during and after a natural disaster. In addition to emergency preparedness planning for your pharmacy, here are a few things that pharmacy managers can do to support their patients and the pharmacy during an emergency pharmacy closure.



Safety

- Ensure the physical and emotional safety and well-being of yourself and your pharmacy staff. Review CPhA's Pharmacy [Workforce Wellness initiative](#) and our Wellness Toolkit for some options.
- Safeguard the integrity of medications and equipment via alternate measures based on the type of natural disaster (e.g., elevation from the ground, water-tight or flame-retardant storage solutions).
- Protect paper records and, if possible, have a system in place to remotely access digital patient records for urgent matters in accordance with your province's privacy legislation.



Communication

- Notify your staff of the closure and establish alternative work arrangements, if applicable.
- Inform your [provincial regulatory body/college](#) of an unplanned pharmacy closure.
- Communicate with your patients through posted signage, voicemail messages, email, media notice or a post on the pharmacy website and/or social media platforms.
- Regularly update patients and your staff members using automated messages, phone or social media platforms to relay information about the situation.



Medication Access

- Contact patients with pending prescriptions and arrange earlier pickup, if feasible. If timely pickup or delivery before closure is impossible, consider temporarily transferring prescriptions to an accessible pharmacy.
- Collaborate with nearby pharmacies or local prescribers to establish alternative medication distribution methods and maintain essential professional services, especially if your pharmacy is the only one in the community.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure continuity of care, such as partnering with another pharmacy, for patients requiring daily dispensing (e.g., opioid agonist maintenance treatment).
- Implement a protocol to manage and conserve lifesaving medication stock (e.g., salbutamol inhalers, epinephrine autoinjectors, etc...) by appropriately triaging and distributing them to patients..

For more tools, information and resources on natural disasters and pharmacy practice, please visit our website at www.pharmacists.ca/disaster.



Canadian Association of Pharmacy for the Environment

Endorsed by the Canadian Association of
Pharmacy for the Environment



Canadian Association
of Pharmacists
Association des
pharmaciens
du Canada



Top Considerations for your Pharmacy: Planning for an Emergency Pharmacy Closure

References

1. Responding to disasters – guidelines for pharmacy. International Pharmaceutical Federation. Published 2016. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://www.fip.org/files/content/pharmacy-practice/military-emergency-pharmacy/emergency-activities/2016-07-responding-to-disasters-guideline.pdf>
2. Information for pharmacies affected by disaster. The Pharmacy Guild of Australia. Updated March 4, 2022. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://www.guild.org.au/guild-branches/nsw/pharmacy-support/information-for-pharmacies-affected-by-disaster>
3. Permanent and temporary pharmacy closures checklist. College of Pharmacists of Manitoba. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://cphm.ca/wp-content/uploads/Resource-Library/Signs-and-Forms/Permanent-Temporary-Pharmacy-Closure-Checklist.pdf>
4. Notification of temporary pharmacy closure. Ontario College of Pharmacists. Published June 2018. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://www.ocpinfo.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Notification-Form-for-Temporary-Closures.pdf>
5. Temporary pharmacy closures policy. Prince Edward Island College of Pharmacy. Published March 18, 2020. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://pepharmacists.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Temporary-Closures.pdf>
6. Emergency preparedness resource kit for pharmacists. College of Pharmacists of Manitoba. Published July 2016. Accessed August 24, 2023. <https://cphm.ca/wp-content/uploads/Resource-Library/Guidelines/Emergency-Preparedness.pdf>
7. Registration policy: temporary pharmacy closures. Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists. Published April 2020. Accessed August 24, 2023. https://www.nspharmacists.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Policy_TemporaryPhClosures_20170419.pdf#:~:text=It%20is%20acceptable%20for%20a%20licensed%20pharmacy%20to,submitting%20the%20Notification%20of%20Temporary%20Pharmacy%20Closure%20form
8. Pharmacy closures (temporary): model regulatory policy due to pharmacist absence. Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals. Published February 22, 2022. Accessed August 24, 2023. https://saskpharm.ca/document/3643/REF_Pharmacy_Closures_Temp_20160715.pdf#:~:text=%E2%80%9CIt%20is%20permissible%20for%20a%20licensed%20pharmacy%20to,by%20the%20Pharmacy%20Regulatory%20Authority%29%20each%20calendar%20year

Disclaimer: This document is not intended to replace specific provincial guidance from your regulator. Refer to your provincial standards and regulations for more information.



Canadian Association of Pharmacy for the Environment

Endorsed by the Canadian Association of
Pharmacy for the Environment



Canadian Association
of Pharmacists
Association des
pharmaciens
du Canada