

Neighbourhood Pharmacy

NOVEMBER 2020

Gazette



INSIGHTS. ADVOCACY. HEALTHIER CANADIANS.

A publication of the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada

Healthcare in a Digital World

HOW PHARMACY IS EMBRACING TECHNOLOGIES TO DELIVER CARE



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

3 Putting patients first with new technologies

COVER STORY

5 Healthcare in a digital world

Pharmacy at the forefront in the use of technologies to deliver care



ANALYSIS: PHARMACY VS AMAZON

10 Taking care to show care in the face of competition

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

12 Future forward in a pandemic world

VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 26-30
2020

2020 AWARDS

15 Honouring a healthcare trailblazer

16 Leading with passion reaps rewards

ADVOCACY: CONTROLLED DRUGS

17 New authorities advance role as opioid stewards

B.C. FLU VACCINE REPORT

19 A closer look at flu vaccine distribution



CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

20 Taking the pulse of specialty pharmacy

NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

SPECIALTY PHARMACY

VIRTUAL SUMMIT

SEPTEMBER 22 - 23, 2020

THE LAST WORD

23 Stronger than before as we head into 2021

Neighbourhood Pharmacy
Gazette
INSIGHTS. ADVOCACY. HEALTHIER CANADIANS.

Neighbourhood Pharmacy Gazette is published four times a year (twice in 2020) by the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada. 365 Bloor St. E. Suite 2003, Toronto, ON M4W 3L4. 416-226-9100. info@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca

When sharing or reproducing content, please ensure it is sourced to Neighbourhood Pharmacy Gazette.

EXECUTIVE EDITORS

Jennifer Deschenes

jdeschenes@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca

Jeff Mehlretter

jmehlretter@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca

CONSULTING EDITOR

Courtney Secord

csecord@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca

MANAGING EDITOR

Karen Welds

ART DIRECTOR

Shawn Samson

CONTRIBUTORS

Jeff Mehlretter, Rosalind Stefanac,
Karen Welds

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

Lucy Montana

lmontana@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca

Find us online

neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca



We want to hear from you!

Send us your ideas, opinions and questions to help guide the content of the Gazette. We also welcome submissions for contributed articles.

Contact Jennifer Deschenes,

jdeschenes@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca

Putting patients first with new technologies

When I reimagine the delivery of healthcare in a digital world, I don't think about mobile phones and virtual visits and seamless data integration between patients and healthcare providers—although all of that is certainly part of the picture. Those are the tools that will help us perform the magic. The true “magic,” however, will be the realization of patient-centred care.

As put so well in our cover story this issue, leveraging and assimilating all of the new technologies is ultimately about meeting the needs of the patient wherever they are at, rather than where the system is. We've talked about patient centricity for many years, yet our healthcare system has operated in a way that's very provider centric. Understandably so, given our resources, capabilities and regulatory environment at the time.

Today's technologies finally enable us to realize the full potential of patient-centred care by facilitating access like never before. A mother with an ailing child can have a virtual consult in the middle of the night. People with diabetes can share their blood glucose monitoring with their healthcare team with a simple tap on their smartphone. Patients can check in with their providers, including allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, using apps or secure, asynchronous texts or emails. E-prescribing is on its way, and automated refills are already here.

Equally important, we are making headway on the regulatory changes needed to securely and safely support these technologies—progress that has been accelerated by COVID-19.

Not everything can be virtual, of course. Technology is at our service as a tool for triage, and certain services and situations require person-to-person care. And in some cases, a lonely individual would simply like to get out of the house. Wherever the patient is at, whether physically, temporally or psychologically, today's technologies increase our capacity to meet their needs.

On the other hand, a proliferation of technologies for multiple services can be just as confusing as the traditional bricks-and-mortar healthcare system. Navigation support is as essential in a digital world as it is in the physical world.

In the physical world, almost all Canadians are minutes away from their neighbourhood community pharmacy. The pandemic triggered a powerful demonstration of community pharmacy's emerging role as a community healthcare hub. In the digital world, COVID-19 has also sped community pharmacy's implementation of technologies.

Community pharmacy is uniquely situated to become a “virtual front door” or omnichannel to help people easily navigate what's available in both the public healthcare system and the private sector, whether virtually or in person. Our primary objective: to offer our customers and our patients the best of all worlds.



Sandra Hanna

CEO
*Neighbourhood Pharmacy
Association of Canada*

☎ 416-226-9100
✉ info@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca
🐦 [@pharmacy_CAN](https://twitter.com/pharmacy_CAN)

“
Navigation support is as essential in a digital world as it is in the physical world.”



Charlene[§]



Serge[§]



Géraldine[§]

MORE PATIENTS CAN DO IT

WITHOUT LANCETS*

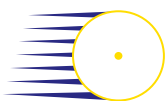
The FreeStyle Libre system gives patients the freedom to test anytime,[†] anywhere[‡]

FreeStyle Libre
FLASH GLUCOSE MONITORING SYSTEM



Reduces A1C

Clinically proven to significantly reduce A1C in type 2 diabetes¹



Easy to Use²

With a painless³ 1-second scan, patients see their current glucose reading, trend arrow, and 8-hour history



Easy to Wear

A small, discreet sensor that is easy to apply and wear² for up to 14 days

Recommend the FreeStyle Libre system to your patients today.
Visit [FreeStyleLibre.ca](https://www.FreeStyleLibre.ca) to learn more

Abbott
life. to the fullest.[®]

The FreeStyle Libre flash glucose monitoring system is indicated for measuring interstitial fluid glucose levels in adults aged 18 years and older with diabetes mellitus. Always read and follow the label/insert.

The FreeStyle LibreLink app and the FreeStyle Libre reader have similar but not identical features. A finger prick test using a blood glucose meter is required during times of rapidly changing glucose levels when interstitial fluid glucose levels may not accurately reflect blood glucose levels or if hypoglycemia or impending hypoglycemia is reported by the FreeStyle LibreLink app or when symptoms do not match the app readings. The FreeStyle Libre sensor communicates with the FreeStyle LibreLink app. The FreeStyle LibreLink app that started it. A sensor started by the FreeStyle Libre reader will also communicate with the FreeStyle LibreLink app. The FreeStyle LibreLink app is only compatible with certain mobile devices and operating systems. Please check the website for more information about device compatibility before using the app. Use of FreeStyle LibreLink requires registration with LibreView.

* Scanning the sensor does not require lancets.

† 60-minute warm-up required when applying the sensor.

‡ Sensor is water-resistant in up to 1 metre (3 feet) of water. Do not immerse longer than 30 minutes. Not to be used above 10,000 feet.

§ Real FreeStyle Libre user.

References: 1. Kröger J, Fasching P, Hanaire H. Three European retrospective real-world chart review studies to determine the effectiveness of flash glucose monitoring on HbA1c in adults with type 2 diabetes. *Diabetes Ther.* 2020;11(1):279-291. 2. Data on file, Abbott Diabetes Care Inc. 3. Haak T, Hanaire H, Ajan R, Hermanns N, Riveline JP, Rayman G. Flash glucose-sensing technology as a replacement for blood glucose monitoring for the management of insulin-treated type 2 diabetes: a multicenter, open-label randomized controlled trial. *Diabetes Ther.* 2017;8(1):55-73.

© 2020 Abbott. FreeStyle, Libre, and related brand marks are marks of Abbott. Product images are for illustrative purposes only. Other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

ADC-30821

Reimagining healthcare in a digital world

Pharmacy at the forefront in the use of technologies to deliver care



Before COVID-19, community pharmacies in Canada were already exploring and implementing new technologies to improve patients' experiences and interactions with pharmacists. The pandemic has undeniably accelerated their efforts. Here's a review of the important strides made this year, and what the future holds.

E-prescribing, a cornerstone

When it comes to new technologies, most attention to date has understandably focused on virtual care, given the immediate urgencies surrounding access and continuity of care. E-prescribing is worthy of equal attention, as it will flow through and optimize many other healthcare technologies, as well as be part of an important bridge for data integration.

It's been almost 20 years and more than \$2 billion in funding since the federal government established Canada Health Infoway, tasked with helping the provinces and territories implement electronic health records, electronic medical records and e-prescribing. In 2017 Infoway launched PrescribeIT and set out to build a pipeline of pharmacists and prescribers who would be ready to implement e-prescribing as agreements with provinces are put in place.

London Drugs helped pilot PrescribeIT in 2018. "The interactions between physicians and pharmacists improved greatly, there was no misreading of prescriptions and it saved patients and pharmacists a lot of time. Pharmacists could focus their conversation on clinical matters," says Chris Chiew, General Manager,

Pharmacy, for London Drugs, adding that London Drugs' 23 pharmacies in Alberta will be fully set up to use the platform in January 2021.

The pandemic has led London Drugs and Canada Health Infoway to redouble efforts to get local physicians on board, in part to offset the jump in faxed prescriptions from physicians working from home. "This is definitely a priority. When we are able to convert them over in Alberta, where PrescribeIT is live, they're thrilled by how easy and seamless it is," says Chiew.

Before the pandemic, close to a third of Canada's community pharmacies, across all pharmacy formats, had enrolled or were in the process, reports Ian Lording, a pharmacist and Senior Director, Relationship Management, at PrescribeIT. Since January 2020, enrollment has climbed by 91 per cent, propelled by agreements with large pharmacy operators including Loblaw Companies Ltd./Shoppers Drug Mart and McKesson/Rexall. Once all of these locations are enrolled, more than 6,500 pharmacies, or 60 per cent of the market outlet share, will be set up. "Interest and enthusiasm from pharmacy was always strong. Now it's rapidly accelerating," says Lording.

Enrollment by physicians has doubled since January 2020, and transaction volume has tripled. While it will take more time to reach critical mass among physicians, queries are steady and Lording doesn't doubt that

pharmacy is helping with physician uptake.

"Momentum feeds momentum," says Lording.

By the end of this year, 12 of the 13 provinces and territories will have signed memorandums of understanding to implement PrescribeIT. Five are already live: Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador. "We are starting to see entire communities now where all pharmacies and physicians are using PrescribeIT. We are well on our way," says Lording.

Virtual care here to stay

For patients, virtual healthcare services are likely the most visible evidence of new technologies implemented since COVID-19. The pandemic served as a burning platform: physicians, pharmacists and other providers had no choice but to turn to the telephone, videoconferencing and electronic communications (texts and emails) to maintain continuity of care.

Nearly seven out of 10 Canadians who sought healthcare assistance during the pandemic had a virtual visit, according to *A Healthy Dialogue*, a report released by Canada Health Infoway in November. Among them, 91 per cent were satisfied with the experience and 76 per cent are willing to keep using it after the pandemic.

In February, the Canadian Medical Association, the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Royal

Special needs of specialty patients

Technology tools can be especially helpful for the unique, complex needs of patients taking specialty medications—and specialty pharmacies are leading the charge.

"We are all looking to use technology so that the touchpoints with patients are meaningful and complementary to our specialty pharmacy services. We are looking at the patient journey and using technology to optimize communication and quality patient care," says Renée St-Jean, Senior Director, Pharmacy Services, at Innomar Strategies.

Innomar is looking to offer a solution where patients would use a single point of entry from which to manage administration of the medication, reimbursement and ongoing care. Paper-based, repetitive documentation would be a thing of the past. However, hurdles regarding the collection and exchange of information need to be overcome.

"We are working with insurers and regulators to accommodate today's innovative technologies. Many of the rules and regulations haven't been modified over the years, and there was certainly no thinking about digital solutions," says St-Jean.

Meanwhile, specialty pharmacies pursue other digital aids. For example, Innomar Strategies acquired the Chronically Simple app in June 2019. The app figuratively and literally takes a weight off. "Patients no longer have to lug around huge binders. They describe it as a game-changer," says Jason Zabransky, Vice-President, Specialty Operations, at Innomar Strategies.

The company is now adding custom functionality to the app, with a focus on integrating with its specialty pharmacy. "The future features will be very tightly tied to services provided by Innomar pharmacies, such as booking your own delivery time for the drug and having virtual conversations with pharmacists," says Zabransky.

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada released their task force report with recommendations for virtual care in the public system. In May, the federal government announced \$240.5 million in funding for virtual care and mental health tools. And in October, Competition Bureau Canada wrapped up consultations for a market study that will “examine how to support digital healthcare in Canada through pro-competitive strategies.”

Against this backdrop, community pharmacy is matching or exceeding the pace of change. Provincial and national associations are lobbying to make permanent the temporary regulations put in place during the pandemic to enable virtual consultations. Equally important, they are working to ensure virtual services are billable. “Not all provinces have enabled pharmacies to bill yet,” says Jeff Mehlretter, Vice-President, Pharmacy and Business Development, at Neighbourhood Pharmacies. “We’re working with provincial drug plans and associations to make sure that takes place.”

In September, Calgary Co-op launched virtual services using a platform that’s well established in the private sector for employers with health benefit plans. Patients can book their appointment online, and receive a link

that they simply click for a video consultation. “Virtual care has really bolstered our reach and ability to connect with patients,” says Sonal Ejner, Pharmacy Professional Services Manager at Calgary Co-op. “While COVID-19 immediately elevated us to move more to the telephone, you cannot do every service by phone. The video platform is really handy to review inhaler technique for COPD and asthma patients.”

London Drugs is in the process of launching a virtual care platform for its pharmacists who are certified diabetes educators. “Diabetes patients are at high risk for COVID-19 complications and video consults are an important option for their regular follow-ups,” says Chiew.

Across Neighbourhood Pharmacies’ members, regional or head office staff are working with interested pharmacy owners or managers to vet and implement virtual care platforms. These providers already power virtual care in the private sector, and will undoubtedly be providers for the public system. Pharmacies can serve as a bridge, and source of learning, for both sides.

In March, Shoppers Drug Mart launched virtual primary care in partnership with Maple, a provider that has implemented telehealth systems for governments.



Proudly dispensing quality products!

♥ Patients are at the heart of all we do!



Apotex is proud to have roots in Canada with a strong focus on the Canadian market:

-  #1 in supplying medicines for Canadian patients
-  4 state-of-the-art manufacturing sites in Canada
-  5,000 employees across Canada
-  45-year footprint in Canada
-  95.3% of APOTEX products sold in Canada are made in Canada

Our leadership team is focused on growing and sustaining Canadian business and maintaining high-quality, highly skilled jobs in our country.

APOTEX
Innovating for
patient affordability

When access to physicians was severely limited during the pandemic, Shoppers Drug Mart promoted online physician consults at no cost. Where public coverage was not available, Shoppers Drug Mart funded the virtual visits for a period of time. The initiative led to almost 20,000 virtual visits in less than a month. The Maple platform is now permanently available in more than 160 Shoppers Drug Mart locations in B.C., with possible expansion in other provinces.

In September, Shoppers Drug Mart announced a \$75 million investment in Maple as part of its overall strategy, with parent company Loblaw Companies Ltd., to help drive a digitally connected healthcare network. "The goal is to structure the program so it is easy for patients to really utilize pharmacy as the front door for whatever they need, whether that 'door' is a brick-and-mortar pharmacy or a virtual platform," says Theresa Firestone, Senior Vice-President, Health and Wellness, at Shoppers Drug Mart.

Pharmacy, the omnichannel

Canada Health Infoway's survey of Canadians found that 92 per cent want technology that makes healthcare as convenient as other aspects of their lives. Eight out of 10

who used health technology in the past year reported they were better able to manage their health.

The *Sanofi Canada Healthcare Survey*, conducted in January 2020, found that 53 per cent of employed Canadians used at least one digital device or mobile app to help achieve personal health or fitness goals in the past year, up from 32 per cent in 2015.

When you marry these findings with the expanding scope of practice for community pharmacists, their growing role in public health, a retail infrastructure of 11,000 locations, most with extended hours, their capability to adopt new technologies quickly and the sheer frequency of interactions with Canadians of all ages, it's no wonder that community pharmacy sees itself as an integral part of the future of healthcare.

"A high priority for us is what we call an omnichannel experience for healthcare. It's really about meeting the needs where the patient is, as opposed to where the system is," says Firestone.

"When we view the role of community pharmacy, we want to fill the gaps and reduce the burden on the healthcare system. All of the new technologies, the virtual services, are a means to that end goal," adds Ejner.



And the key piece of the puzzle, perhaps somewhat ironically, is the flesh-and-blood pharmacist. “The Amazons of the world can only go so far. The new normal may require e-commerce and delivery and artificial intelligence, but our point of differentiation is that when patients are ready to get those services where they need to go there in person, community pharmacists are ready for that,” says Chiew.

In other words, technology can be used to augment the patient-pharmacist relationship, rather than replace it.

Opening the front door

The coming year will see more community pharmacies launching or upgrading mobile apps that can come to serve as a gateway to a range of services from pharmacists and possibly other healthcare providers. A number of members of Neighbourhood Pharmacies already offer an app that enables patients to access their medication profiles and those of family members, and to set up automatic refills.

Loblaw Companies’ PC Health app provides a first look at the omnichannel experience. Launched in October 2020 in partnership with League, a digital health platform

provider in the private health benefits space, PC Health gives users free access to registered nurses and dietitians and incentivizes behaviour change through goal-setting and rewards. Users can also connect with care navigators to source services in the public system or through private-sector providers. The app is now available in B.C., Alberta, Ontario and the Atlantic provinces and will expand to the remaining provinces in early 2021.

Over time the PC Health app will expand to include pharmacists and other healthcare providers. “It could be a consultation with a dietitian, a diabetes medication review with the pharmacist or virtual physician care,” says Firestone. “We really see ourselves as a broader healthcare organization, which goes beyond the pharmacy offering. Our overall purpose is to help Canadians live life well.”



Karen Welds writes for healthcare provider publications, with more than 25 years of experience covering community pharmacy. info@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca





Your free online store awaits.

- Connecting online customers with Pharmacies
- Don't let shelf space limit you
- Over 16,000 home health care products available
- Online Payment Processing

Sign Up Now
800.457.6029 | P2H.ca

Taking care to show care in the face of competition

Canadian consumers are more interested in products and services that promote wellness, according to recent research commissioned by Neighbourhood Pharmacies—and they give pharmacy retailers higher scores on that front than they give to Amazon.

WSL Strategic Retail surveyed Canadian shoppers on behalf of Neighbourhood Pharmacies in March. Results were presented at the Association's [Virtual Fall Conference](#), and additional results are available [on its website](#).

One aspect of the research study incorporated “caring scores.” WSL has used these scores as part of their U.S. surveys for many years to enable retailers to benchmark themselves against other retailers. Survey participants indicate their level of agreement with nine standardized statements on the topics of wellness, price and service. For our Canadian survey, we compared shoppers’ caring scores for retailers with pharmacies against their scores for Amazon. We also differentiated between the traditional drugstore format and the store-in-store format (for example, a pharmacy in a grocery store). The results, shown in the table, reveal some interesting perceptions among consumers.

Canadian Shoppers’ Caring Scores for Retailers with Pharmacies Compared to Amazon

	Caring Score		
	Drugstore Pharmacy	Store-in-Store	Amazon
1. This retailer cares about helping me keep my family healthy.	38	30	23
2. This retailer cares enough to offer healthier choices I can afford.	34	34	26
3. This retailer displays healthier choices to encourage me to buy them.	33	33	22
4. This retailer demonstrates that they care about our community.	38	33	21
5. Most of the prices in this store are fair.	34	42	45
6. I feel I get good value for the money I spend here.	35	45	51
7. This retailer has services that make my shopping easier.	39	40	58
8. The sales associates in this store respect the customers.	50	43	31
9. I don't usually get stressed shopping here.	52	49	63
Overall Composite Caring Score	39	39	38

What Science Can Do

AstraZeneca 

At AstraZeneca, we believe in the power of what science can do to transform serious diseases like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, COPD and asthma.

Each and everyone of us is bold in the belief that science should be at the centre of everything we do. It compels us to push the boundaries of what is possible. To trust in the potential of ideas and pursue them, alone and with others, until we have transformed the treatment of disease.

Together we can develop creative solutions to help tackle the challenges of effectively preventing and treating disease. AstraZeneca Canada Inc. is proud of our commitment to support Canada's healthcare community.



The AstraZeneca logo is a registered trade-mark of AstraZeneca AB.

The overall scores for pharmacy retailers and Amazon are almost identical. However, significant differences emerge within the caring-score statements. Amazon receives lower scores for the four wellness statements (one to four) and higher scores for price and value. Amazon also receives a higher score for stress-free shopping. The greatest spread occurs with statements seven and eight: Amazon gets higher marks for ease of shopping, while pharmacy retailers come out well ahead in terms of the helpfulness of sales staff. These results confirm that shopping in a pharmacy can be a much more personal experience.

This survey took place just prior to the first lockdown in Canada and, as we all know, online shopping has exploded since then. Many consumers have become habituated to the ease and convenience of online shopping and will continue to choose online for some of their shopping needs, even after the pandemic. As WSL's Elizabeth Gretkowski noted during her presentation at the Fall Conference, this begs the question: "What should pharmacies do to compete against giant online retailers like Amazon?"

Doug Stephens, Founder of Retail Prophet in Canada, also presented at the Fall Conference. He predicted the expansion of today's online retailers into areas such as financial services and healthcare. These "apex predators" will dominate the retail landscape and have no "natural competitors." To survive, he advises other retailers to have strategies that allow them to thrive in the niches where such giants do not perform well.

The caring scores from the WSL help illustrate that the natural strengths of pharmacy retailers include a more personal, empathetic approach to customer service—to meet needs that can't be fully sussed out by online algorithms, no matter how artificially intelligent. These fundamental findings can help pharmacy retailers develop successful strategies for competing in an increasingly digital and online world.



*Jeff Mehlretter is Vice-President, Pharmacy and Business Development, at Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada.
jmehlretter@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca*

Supporting pharmacists as immunization leaders

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

SUPPLIED CONTENT,
BROUGHT TO YOU BY



Pfizer is recognized as a global leader in helping prevent disease, with a focus on immunization. Fabien Paquette, Vaccines Canada Lead, Pfizer Canada, weighs in on the growing importance of pharmacists in the immunization space, and how Pfizer is supporting this cause.

Role of pharmacists in immunizations during COVID-19

With the pandemic, access to a variety of healthcare providers was reduced significantly and the role of retail pharmacists in optimizing immunizations took on much greater importance. COVID-19 has been an eye-opener for other healthcare providers in seeing the retail pharmacist as a partner in supporting the well-being of Canadians. It has also been an opportunity for government to see the value of retail pharmacy as a partner in achieving public health goals and in some provinces, their role in immunizations has expanded and hopefully that will remain moving forward.

How Pfizer is supporting pharmacy We recognized early on that pharmacists were becoming the hub for patient information. We also knew immunization programs across the country had been impacted by the pandemic and wanted to provide as much information as possible. We worked with pharmacists and other healthcare providers to put together online educational events to address their questions and concerns. We have run more than 50 events for healthcare providers since the pandemic started.

Future initiatives The most frequent feedback we get from pharmacists is their desire to be more equipped to set up and lead immunization programs. We will continue to expand our offerings of educational resources in multiple formats (e.g., interactive workshops, peer-to-peer sessions, etc.) to ensure they feel supported and confident in their abilities. We also want to raise awareness of the essential role pharmacists play in promoting vaccine awareness and helping achieve public health goals for vaccine-preventable diseases.

Future forward in a pandemic world

COVID-19 has put a spotlight on the valuable role of pharmacies and pharmacists in reaching Canadians, both as shoppers and as patients.

Industry leaders and other stakeholders gathered from October 26 to 30 for Neighbourhood Pharmacies' first Virtual Fall Conference to discuss emerging shopper behaviours and new focal points for government.

The WELL movement

"We are living a very dynamic, rapidly changing *well* movement...moving from sick care to well care to whole care," said Elizabeth Gretkowski, Senior Consultant for WSL Strategic Retail, based in New York.

The survey of Canadian shoppers, conducted in March

by WSL for Neighbourhood Pharmacies, showed that more shoppers have a holistic view of wellness crossing multiple categories, from over-the-counter drugs to beauty and home care. At least half view wellness as being financially responsible, having mental wellbeing and looking better.

Consumers are seeking alternative treatments, with 46 per cent taking a multivitamin every day and 21 per cent saying they would consider genetic testing. Food is also playing a bigger role, with 47 per cent eating less sugar.

While people have cut back on spending during the pandemic, there is also "a whole slew of people who want to buy purposeful products...and they're willing

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Building healthcare resiliency in a pandemic economy

SUPPLIED CONTENT,
BROUGHT TO YOU BY

AMGEN[®]



As COVID-19 disrupted Canadian healthcare systems, leaders across the country were forced to confront numerous interconnected challenges: protecting the vulnerable and treating the sick, modifying and

reconfiguring institutions, systems and technologies, as well as designing and implementing new public health protocols.

Although they performed admirably under enormous pressure, the pandemic exposed and exacerbated important long-standing gaps and weaknesses in long-term care, immunization, digital health, scope of practice and access to innovation.

With the worst days of the pandemic hopefully behind us, Canada has a unique opportunity to rethink, redesign and rework its healthcare systems. A once-in-a-century crisis should be met with a once-in-a-century response – one that relentlessly pushes for new models of care, more innovative

approaches and improved patient outcomes. In a word, Canada needs to build more resilient healthcare systems.

With its focus on outcomes over inputs, Amgen believes that Value-Based Healthcare (VBHC) offers system leaders the best approach to predicting and preventing disease by intervening early, and by investing in accelerated access to critically important treatments and technologies. We believe that Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada (Neighbourhood Pharmacies) and the pharmacies it supports have a critical role to play in resilient healthcare systems by supporting positive patient outcomes and providing accessible treatments and therapies.

That's why we're committed to working with Neighbourhood Pharmacies and a wide range of other experts to launch a new conversation inspired by the lessons learned from COVID-19. By leveraging perspectives from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, this conversation can help build healthcare systems across Canada that are stronger, more adaptable and more resilient.

to pay more for it," said Gretkowski. Those wanting to entice these shoppers have to look at their entire business through a wellness lens to determine how to be more relevant.

Finding purpose

In the shadow of giant conglomerates like Amazon, Walmart and Asia's Alibaba, smaller retailers can still shine, said Doug Stephens, Founder of Retail Prophet.

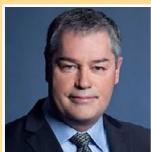
The pandemic is pulling retailers from the industrial era to a digital one, with new opportunities to give customers a better experience in-store and online via the use of chatbots, live streaming and artificial intelligence.

Rather than looking to compete on price, convenience and selection, which will be dominated by "apex predators" such as Amazon, Stephens urged retailers to think about their purpose in the lives of consumers. "What precise question are you the answer to?"

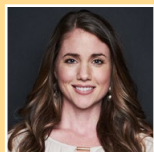
From a pharmacy perspective, the treatment of illness is a narrow position from which to compete, observed Stephens. Instead, the support of wellness opens up a slew of opportunities. "Prescriptions and vaccinations are still part of the bargain, but now we can start conversations about nutrition...overall fitness and mental wellbeing."



Dr. Bob Bell
Former Ontario
Deputy Minister
of Health



Dr. Yves Bolduc
Former Quebec
Minister of Health



**Elizabeth
Gretkowski**
WSL Strategic Retail



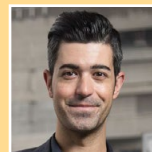
**Dr. Perry
Kendall**
BC Centre on
Substance Use



Mark Nafekh
Public Health
Agency of Canada



Doug Stephens
Retail Prophet



**Brendan
Dunlop**
Sportscaster



**Christine
Sinclair**
Professional
soccer player

mint

PHARMACEUTICALS INC.

Trusted Partners in Healthcare

With a focus on best in-class supply chain management, Mint has averted 15 national drug shortages in Canada on 10 different molecules since 2014. Most recently, we ensured Canadians had continued access to Hydroxychloroquine during the COVID-19 pandemic despite unprecedented demand and global shortages of the product. Pharmacies across Canada rely on Mint everyday.





Working Together to Put Canadians First



We are a **Canadian company** with global headquarters in the Montreal area.



Our decisions always **prioritize Canadian needs.**



We have **one of the largest product portfolio** in Canada.



We are the **leader in product launches** in Canada.



Most of our volume sold in Canada is also **manufactured in Canada.**



We are committed to maintain **inventory levels above the industry average.**



We are **your local partner** to enhance Canadians' well-being.



jamppharma.ca

CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

Plus, consumers are willing to spend more on wellness than ever before, said Stephens. He suggested that pharmacies create alliances in the community, such as with yoga studios and massage therapists, so they can offer a much more “expansive conversation” when it comes to wellness solutions.

Wins and woes during COVID-19

The pandemic put the performance of Canada’s entire healthcare system under a microscope, revealing some major wins as well as huge gaps, agreed participants in a panel discussion.

“We haven’t seen the kind of situation [here] that has been so tragically on display in other countries where healthcare systems have been overwhelmed,” said Dr. Bob Bell, Ontario’s former Deputy Minister of Health. However, what happened in long-term care facilities has sadly put attention on Canada. “Statistics suggest that in terms of the proportion of people who have died from COVID-19, we have the world’s largest proportion in long-term care homes.”

Panelists agreed that many wins to date have come from community pharmacies and pharmacists who stepped up to carry out critical activities (e.g., patient education, renewal/delivery of medications, patient consultations, screenings, vaccine distribution, etc.). “It shows they are important and effective community partners operating on the frontline of Canada’s health system, and that role will continue to be relevant,” said Mark Nafeekh, Director General, Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Equity, Public Health Agency of Canada.

Some of the biggest gaps are in prevention (including affordable access to options) and better use of health data systems. “The infrastructure is there but we need to collect information to be able to gear our services to those who need it most,” said Nafeekh.

“We could manage chronic diseases much better than we do now,” added Dr. Perry Kendall, co-interim Executive Director at the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use. He emphasized the need to bring in multiple healthcare practitioners to work together, along with more health education and access to virtual care.

Dr. Yves Bolduc, former Minister of Health in Quebec, agreed that virtual care will play a much bigger role. “What we see at this moment is that we can give very good care seeing patients 30 per cent of the time in person, and 70 per cent of the time by phone or computer.”

Honouring a healthcare trailblazer

Len Marks Pharmacy Advancement Award: **Domenic Pilla**

Anyone who crosses paths with Domenic Pilla knows he has strong beliefs when it comes to Canada's healthcare system and what it needs to survive.

"Unfortunately, in its current incarnation it is not sustainable and our legacy is at risk...and I think pharmacy has to be at the centre of re-engineering it," said Pilla at the virtual awards ceremony to honour his win of the Len Marks Pharmacy Advancement Award from Neighbourhood Pharmacies.

A pharmacy advocate throughout his 20 years in the healthcare industry, it's fitting that Pilla is the recipient of this particular award. "This award fits my beliefs," he said. "Pharmacy is at the centre of our future and I will continue to support it."

Pilla, who was Chief Executive Officer of McKesson Canada before retiring in August, oversaw the company's pharmaceutical distribution, specialty health, independent pharmacy and retail pharmacy businesses. He also worked at McKesson earlier in his career, when he helped grow the company into new areas, including pharmacy technology, with a focus on meeting the changing needs of pharmacy customers and healthcare partners.

Pilla also served as CEO of Shoppers Drug Mart Corporation until its sale to Loblaw Companies Ltd. in 2014, at which point he became President of Shoppers

Drug Mart and a Director of Loblaw Companies. An engineer by profession, he enjoyed an 18-year tenure at Petro Canada before switching gears into healthcare.

Although retired now, Pilla has no intention of giving up his healthcare advocacy work. Attendees at the virtual awards ceremony expressed their appreciation for his continued commitment.

"I view you as great visionary leader," said Dan Chiasson, President and CEO, Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management. "I'm grateful that you're putting up your hand and continuing to do advocacy work."

Mona Sabharwal, Rexall's Senior Vice-President, Pharmacy Services, said she'd heard of Pilla's leadership and passion for healthcare before she'd ever met him. "Your reputation precedes you," she said. "You've inspired many of us to

think really big and boldly about how we should lead to implement long-term success."

Rita Winn, Director, Lovell Drugs, recalled the leadership Pilla showed during the creation of Neighbourhood Pharmacies' *9000 Points of Care: Improving Access to Affordable Healthcare* report in 2013. "That's a pivotal piece of work that is still relevant today," she said. "I agree that we need to do more for our healthcare system, and I hope people like you will continue to stay involved to push it forward."



DOMENIC PILLA



ABOUT THE AWARD

The Len Marks Pharmacy Advancement Award was established in memory of pharmacist Len Marks, who was an advocate for community pharmacy. This award recognizes someone whose passion for the advancement of pharmacy helps lead change in the areas of education, pharmacy practice, advocacy and collaboration.

Leading with passion reaps rewards

Distinguished Associate of the Year Award: **Martin Arès**

With a reputation for being a strategic thinker and passionate leader, Martin Arès has the magic touch to engage with people to tackle challenging and ambitious goals, connect with customers and shape industry trends. Under

his watch, Sandoz Canada was named best generics company and partner three years running. He was instrumental in evolving Sandoz Canada into a unique bio-generic entity with one of the largest product portfolios in the industry—and his vocal support of the role of pharmacists never wavered.

In accepting his award for Distinguished Associate of the Year from Neighbourhood Pharmacies, Arès was quick to acknowledge his entire team. “This award reflects the efforts that we as a company have made to become trusted partners, and everything we’re doing to increase the role of pharmacists in Canada,” he said. “You can’t do things by yourself and I’m really proud to recognize that I have a great team surrounding me.”

Tim Smith, Senior Vice-President, Business Development, McKesson Canada, noted that the work Arès and his team have done in advancing biosimilars has been “foundational and has set the stage for

greater opportunities to come.” He also stressed that it would be difficult to find anyone in the industry “who works harder and is more committed to the cause; for Martin it’s not just a program or a number, it’s about making a positive difference in peoples’ lives.”

Tanya Moore, Vice-President, Pharmaceutical

Partnerships, Shoppers Drug Mart, said Arès exemplifies all the qualities that this award represents. “He is dedicated to supporting retail pharmacy and the advancement of pharmacists as the core to his day-to-day approach in managing the business and supporting his pharmacy customers,” she said. “There is a true understanding and appreciation of the value that pharmacists offer to the sustainability of healthcare in Canada.”

As further proof of his passion for the profession, Arès told attendees at the virtual ceremony that pharmacists and pharmacy owners “are all heroes” in his eyes. “Without them Sandoz Canada wouldn’t be able to fulfill its purpose to get patients access to their medications.”

With more than 25 years of global pharmaceutical experience under his belt, Arès started his career in sales and quickly advanced into senior leadership positions and global roles in Europe. Upon his return to Montreal in 2012, he held commercial leadership roles at Bristol Myers Squibb and Sanofi until he joined Sandoz Canada in 2016.

As a member of the Sandoz Canada Executive Committee since 2016, Arès was Vice-President, Bio-Generics, Pharmacies & Wholesalers Channel, Head of Generics, before being promoted to the Sandoz U.S. organization in November 2020 as Business Head, Solid Oral Generics. He is still based out of Montreal.



MARTIN ARÈS

ABOUT THE AWARD



The Distinguished Associate of the Year Award honours a Neighbourhood Pharmacies Associate in good standing who displays extraordinary commitment to the Association’s initiatives and/or committees, while helping advance community pharmacy.

New authorities advance role as opioid stewards



The COVID-19 pandemic opened the door for pharmacists to play a more direct role in pain management for patients taking controlled drugs.

Neighbourhood Pharmacies and other pharmacy advocacy bodies are making the case to open that door wide, and permanently, as an important component of opioid harm reduction strategies.

On March 19, 2020, just days after the World Health Organization had declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, Health Canada issued exemptions under

Section 56 of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA). For regulated drugs such as opioids, pharmacists became temporarily authorized to:

- accept verbal prescriptions;
- transfer prescriptions;
- extend and renew prescriptions; and
- permit pharmacy employees to deliver prescriptions.

These exemptions are subject to the laws and regulations of the province or territory—an important clarification given the range in scopes of pharmacy practice in Canada. Having said that, most provinces and territories were able to apply most or all of the exemptions. (For more details, consult the [chart](#) compiled by the Canadian Pharmacists Association.)



Pharmascience is here for you!

Pharmascience is proud to be one of the major pharmaceutical companies involved in the production and distribution of medicines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We thank our partners and customers for allowing us to maintain our operations, as well as the government authorities for recognizing the importance of our collective daily efforts. Without them, we would not be able to supply our patients with the products they need.

The men and women of Pharmascience unite their efforts, going above and beyond the call of duty, to fulfill our mission as the largest manufacturer of generic pharmaceuticals in Québec.



Jean-Guy Goulet
Chief Operating Officer, Pharmascience



Buy local, even from the pharmacy!



Health Canada had originally stated these temporary authorities for pharmacists would expire on September 30, 2020; it has since extended the deadline for another year, until September 30, 2021, unless the exemptions are replaced or revoked before then.

"We will have almost two years of experience to consider the impact of this expanded role for pharmacists in terms of outcomes for patients and the healthcare system," says Jeff Mehlretter, Vice-President, Pharmacy and Business Development, at Neighbourhood Pharmacies. "We will also use that time to advocate for making these authorities permanent."

Anecdotally, members of the Association report high levels of patient satisfaction, he notes. "Patients appreciate that the pharmacist can ensure that continuity of care, which is so important for those suffering from chronic pain. Long-term care facilities have also said this is very helpful, especially when moving patients between facilities."

Two routes exist to make these authorities permanent: extend the exemptions indefinitely or add pharmacists to the CDSA's list of practitioners who can

prescribe controlled substances. Neighbourhood Pharmacies is opting for the latter route.

"Exemptions under Section 56 are meant to be short-term and narrowly targeted. An update to the list of prescribers recognizes how expansions to pharmacists' scope of practice over the past years have set the profession up to be more proactive in this important area of care," says Mehlretter.

An updated list of practitioners is also a simpler approach to address provincial and territorial scopes of practice. "In practical terms this is a more clear-cut way for regulators to be able to continue to provide guidance at the provincial level," summarizes Mehlretter.

"We're looking forward to seeing whether or not the exemptions issued by Health Canada become permanent changes to the legislation," says Anu Sharma, Senior Policy & Legislation Analyst, B.C. College of Pharmacists. "As we move forward, the College is modernizing its requirements to be principle-based, allowing greater flexibility in how pharmacy services are provided while ensuring they still achieve their intended public safety outcome."



Patients rely on you. You can rely on us.

Rely on our unified Bio-Generic sales team, our leadership position in Canada, our strong Sandoz-Novartis supply network, our large portfolio of high-quality generics and biosimilars, and our patient support programs designed to ease access to treatments.

We take care of your needs so you can take care of your patients.

As your partners in this rapidly evolving world, we help you anticipate and harness market changes, capitalize on new product launches and ensure a reliable supply of medicines to your patients, for a more robust and sustainable healthcare system.

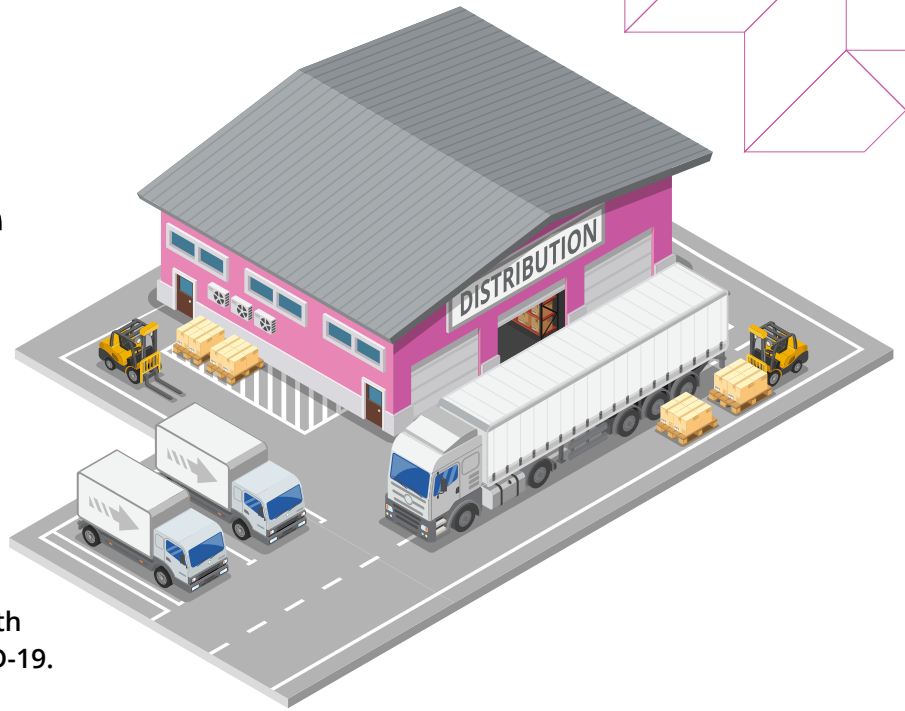
When we work together, the future looks better than ever.

SANDOZ A Novartis
Division

www.sandoz.ca

A closer look at flu vaccine distribution

B.C.'s current distribution system for influenza vaccines to pharmacies and physicians requires major resources from Public Health. Switching to the pharmaceutical distribution system could result in substantial gains, especially now with resources stretched to capacity due to COVID-19. Here are highlights from Neighbourhood Pharmacies' August 2020 report on the benefits of shifting influenza vaccine distribution in B.C. to the private-sector distribution model.



The report examined two B.C. pilot projects conducted by Shoppers Drug Mart (with the Interior Health Authority) and McKesson (with the Island Health Authority). These pilots found that a pharmaceutical distribution system resulted in:

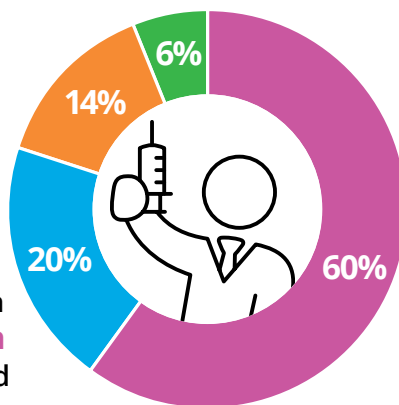
- Significantly less or no vaccine wastage due to cold chain breaks or distribution waste.
- Fewer or no patients turned away due to lack of inventory.
- Increased vaccination rates.
- A better use of pharmacists' time as they could focus on patient care rather than pick up orders.
- Easier end-of-season reporting as results are consolidated by the distributor.

Given the benefits, the report recommended an immediate transition to the pharmaceutical distribution system for pharmacies. While that is now too late for the 2020/21 flu season, recent communications with decision makers in B.C. indicate the recommendation is getting serious consideration for the 2021/22 season. Neighbourhood Pharmacies has offered to be part of a working group to map out a plan.

Lead immunizer

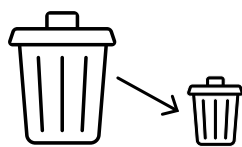
- Pharmacists
- Public Health
- Physicians
- Other

Pharmacists in B.C. are anticipated to administer more than half of the **1.5 million** vaccine doses ordered for the 2020/21 season.



Less waste

A pharmaceutical distribution model is predicted to reduce wasted doses by **at least half**, resulting in savings as well as more vaccinations.



Get the full report here

Cost Comparisons of Vaccine Distribution Options in British Columbia

Taking the pulse of specialty pharmacy

NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
SPECIALTY PHARMACY
 VIRTUAL SUMMIT
 SEPTEMBER 22 - 23, 2020

The complexities of specialty pharmaceuticals have led to the emergence of a specialty pharmacy sector within community pharmacy. Neighbourhood Pharmacies' first Specialty Pharmacy Summit, held virtually and attended by more than 200 on September 22 and 23, explores what lies ahead for this rapidly evolving market.

Changes and challenges

Specialty pharmaceuticals account for approximately 30 per cent of spending by public and private drug plans, for less than two per cent of Canadians.¹ Their growing share of revenue leads payors and healthcare providers to wrestle even more with how to affordably provide access to these potentially life-changing drugs.

"Specialty pharmaceuticals are at the forefront of discussions around a national pharmacare, a rare disease drug strategy and pricing reform," said Karl Frank, Divisional Director, Bayshore Specialty Rx and Board Chair of Neighbourhood Pharmacies. "Specialty pharmacies need to be part of the discussion because we are ideally positioned as critical solution providers for governments and decision makers."

Past decisions or the lack thereof—such as capped mark-ups and the absence of professional service fees specific to specialty pharmacy—have put strain on the sector's economic viability. Regulatory changes are required, as well as improved integration between specialty and traditional community pharmacies.



"We need to consolidate a pathway to enable each other to provide a better model of care for patients, with measurable results for both health outcomes and system costs," said Karen Chuk, Vice-President, Specialty Pharmacy Services, McKesson Canada.

As well, specialty pharmacies are at the forefront of technological innovation in order to manage the sector's unique complexities, optimize efficiencies and relieve cost pressures. Increasingly, "we are using the data to generate real-world evidence that will shift the focus away from cost to investment, to truly show the tremendous benefits of these medications and specialty pharmacy services," said Chris Dalseg, Vice-President, Strategic Growth and Marketing, BioScript Solutions.

Pilot projects and social impact bonds can kickstart innovative models of practice and an appropriate reimbursement framework, agreed panelists at the Specialty Pharmacy Summit.

Patient support programs

Manufacturers are updating their patient support programs (PSPs) in response to cost pressures as well as patients' needs. "They are using technology to drive operational efficiency and connectivity with patients," said Allison Wills, Partner and Consultant, 20Sense Specialty Pharmaceutical Consulting.

New emerging models include broad-spectrum PSPs for multiple drugs from multiple manufacturers



Andrew Bhakit
Bayshore
Specialty Rx



Karen Chuk
McKesson
Canada



Chris Dalseg
BioScript
Solutions



Jane Farnham
Canadian
Organization for
Rare Disorders



Karl Frank
Bayshore
HealthCare



Nadia Khassassi
ACCESSA



Karine Matteau
Biosimilars
Canada



Renée St-Jean
Innomar
Strategies



Drew Taylor
Acorn Biolabs

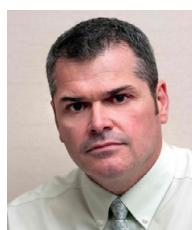


Allison Wills
20Sense Specialty
Pharmaceutical
Consulting

Technology helps pharmacists empower patients

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

SUPPLIED CONTENT,
BROUGHT TO YOU BY



At his London Drugs Pharmacy in Lethbridge, Alberta, pharmacist and diabetes educator Rick Siemens was used to having a busy diabetes practice. But when COVID-19 hit, the demand for his expertise exploded. "With physicians so backed up, there is more opportunity for pharmacists to help manage patients with diabetes," he says. "Some patients haven't had an A1C test in six months so it's crucial that pharmacists are involved in monitoring."

To keep up with demand, especially now that patients aren't coming into the pharmacy as often, Siemens looks to flash glucose monitoring and cloud-based diabetes management systems such as LibreView,* where patients can upload† their glucose data to share with providers. "Platforms like these are so impactful because they give me the chance to see a patient's day-to-day struggles," he says. "When they're only

coming in once every three months, I don't know where the peaks and valleys are so we can specifically work on that."

Siemens notes that in helping empower patients to use tools like these, they can dramatically improve their blood sugar levels. "It's a great teaching tool for them, and for pharmacists it's a safety net of information in making clinical recommendations," he says. "Another great thing is that I'm able to easily share* the results of my interventions with physicians, so they see value too."

The reality is that physicians can't be experts in everything and don't have the time and resources, says Siemens. "This is a real opportunity for pharmacists to step up and use technologies to help patients—and the physicians who want their patients to do well."

* The LibreView website is compatible with certain operating systems and browsers only. Please check www.libreview.com for additional information.

† Use of FreeStyle LibreLink requires registration with LibreView. Automatic upload requires a wireless internet connection or mobile data connection. ADC-30497 v2.0

and “turbo-charged” PSPs with services for the total patient population, not just those enrolled in the PSP. A common goal is the gathering of real-world evidence. “Manufacturers have accelerated efforts to show the strategic value of PSPs and how that infrastructure can support larger health outcomes,” said Wills.

Jane Farnham, Co-Chair of the Board, Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders, emphasized the value of involving patients in the design of PSPs. “We need to get above the brand, collaborate around therapeutic areas and look further at the total needs of the patient. Whoever gets that right will be the winner.”

Summit participants also learned about ACCESSA, a PSP that recently became available in Québec. It is Canada’s first province-wide, community pharmacy-driven PSP, initiated by the association of Québec pharmacy owners (Association Québécoise des pharmaciens propriétaires). ACCESSA offers centralized coordination, oversight and support for patients, providers and clients. “Our goal is to democratize access to specialty medications,” said Nadia Khassassi, Senior Director, Operational Development, ACCESSA.

Biosimilars in Canada

Fourteen biosimilar biologics have been approved so far in 2020, bringing the total to 32 in Canada, and another 11 are under review by Health Canada.² In 2019, B.C. successfully implemented its biosimilars switching initiative. A similar program is underway in Alberta, and Ontario and Québec are seriously looking at it. “We are engaging with stakeholders regarding initiatives

to increase knowledge about biosimilars,” summarized Karine Matteau, Vice-President and Head of Biosimilars, Sandoz Canada.

What does this all mean for community pharmacists? A potentially busy year supporting patients taking biologics and who may be switched to a biosimilar, given that 73 per cent of biologic medicines go through community pharmacies. “There could be a lot of patients who will need to transition,” said Matteau.

In B.C., pharmacists billed PharmaCare \$15 to help patients make the transition. While the amount may not have been enough, it was a positive step by government. Speaking on behalf of Biosimilars Canada, Matteau emphasized the need to “better elevate the role of pharmacists in the transitioning of patients.”

Community pharmacies are also natural partners for biosimilar PSPs, depending on the medication, by enabling more cost reduction with convenient services. “There is a role for pharmacists in patient education, injection training and support to the patient,” said Matteau.

References: 1. Annual Report 2018. Patented Medicine Prices Review Board. 2. Note these numbers have been updated since the conference. Source: Government of Canada. Notice of Compliance search. <https://health-products.canada.ca/noc-ac/index-eng.jsp> (Accessed Nov. 10, 2020).

Looking for a one-stop educational resource on specialty pharmacy in Canada?

Download your copy of the *Neighbourhood Pharmacies’ report today!*



SAVE THE DATE: MAY 11 & 12, 2021

A ONE-OF-A-KIND MEETING WITH LEADERS

Our Executive Summit, to be held virtually in 2021, will bring together pharmacy leaders from a variety of disciplines to share insights, tips and research results that will assist our members by identifying opportunities in the business of pharmacy and delivery of care.

Attendees will focus exclusively on learning, strategy and relationship-building. Looking to the future, we will examine new research, fresh ideas and critical trends that are impacting our industry.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACIES' **EXECUTIVE SUMMIT 2021**

Virtual • May 11 & 12

Stronger than before as we head into 2021

Selfless. Uplifting. Brave. Ready.

If you were to ask me to describe in a few words the character of community pharmacists based on their actions during the past eight months, these are among the first to spring to mind. As someone who works in government relations and as a member of the Advocacy & Government Advisory Committee of Neighbourhood Pharmacies, I am extremely proud to be able to represent community pharmacists, to amplify their voice and their capabilities, which are finally resonating at a deeper level with governments.

To say that these months have also been difficult would be an understatement. "Fearful" is not too strong a word to describe those early weeks without personal protective equipment, and then the ongoing challenges, month after month, heightened by influenza vaccinations and, for some, COVID-19 testing. Yet even among those pharmacists who were initially anxious about testing, bravery and resolve take hold. Buoyed by training and tactical supports on the one side and by patients' needs and appreciation on the other, pharmacists have stepped up and become stronger. And I believe they stand ready to do more.

The members of Neighbourhood Pharmacies have also stepped up. While we have always set aside our competitive hats to do the work of the Association, these past months have forged an even

stronger resolve to speak on behalf of pharmacies in all communities, across all formats. Together we can also more effectively build additional resilience into the business of pharmacy so that pharmacists can sustainably answer the calls of governments and patients.

Testing for COVID-19 will move to the foreground with the coming point of care tests that do not require lab capacity. A healthcare professional's oversight is essential in administering the tests and reporting the results, and community pharmacists are ideally situated to test high-priority, high-risk populations such as long-term care staff, health workers and educators. COVID-19 vaccines are not far behind, and conversations are underway to consider the role of pharmacists in vaccination strategies.

Not to mention the work to be done outside of COVID-19. National pharmacare is still on the federal agenda. Proposals for a single public-payor system are out of step with what's best for patients, provincial healthcare systems and the economy. Our current mixed-payor system has functioned incredibly well through the pandemic; the same cannot be said for current approaches in other areas, such as long-term care and opioid harm reduction.

The coming year will be pivotal in determining healthcare priorities nationally and provincially; community pharmacy is in a stronger position than ever before to help move decisions in the right direction.



Perry Martin

BOARD MEMBER
*Neighbourhood Pharmacy
Association of Canada*

VICE-PRESIDENT,
GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS
*Loblaw Companies Ltd./
Shoppers Drug Mart*

“These past months have forged an even stronger resolve to speak on behalf of pharmacies in all communities, across all formats.”



**Neighbourhood
Pharmacy**
Association of Canada

Association canadienne
des pharmacies
de quartier

The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada advocates for the business of neighbourhood pharmacy and its vital role in sustaining the accessibility, quality and affordability of healthcare for Canadians. Through its members and associates, Neighbourhood Pharmacies is driving innovative solutions through advocacy, networking, research and information services.

The benefits of membership include:

- Industry-wide representation with governments
- Exclusive business-building networking events
- Informed and independent information-sharing and analysis
- Real-time industry and regulatory updates

OUR MEMBERS



OUR ASSOCIATES

Abbott Laboratories Co.

Ascensia Diabetes Care

HTL-Stefa

Mylan Pharmaceuticals ULC.

Roche Diagnostics Canada

Amgen Canada Inc.

ASOP (Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies)

Impres Pharma Inc.

Natco Pharma (Canada) Inc.

Sandoz Canada Inc.

Aphria Inc.

Inmar

Odan Laboratories Ltd.

Sanofi Pasteur Ltd.

Apotex Canada

AstraZeneca Canada Inc.

IQVIA

Omniceil, Inc.

ScriptPro Canada Ltd.

AuroPharma Canada

Jamp Pharma Corp.

Pear Healthcare Solutions

Seqirus Canada Inc.

Aurora Cannabis Inc.

Johnson & Johnson Inc.

Pfizer Canada Inc.

Sterimax Inc.

BD Medical – Diabetes Care

Jones Healthcare Group

Pharmacy2Home

Teligent Inc.

Canopy Growth Cosper Distribution Inc.

Kohl & Frisch Ltd.

Pharmacy Quality Solutions

Teva Canada Limited

Healthmark Ltd.

Lifescan Canada Ltd.

Pharmascience Canada

Trudell Medical International

Mint Pharmaceuticals

Pure Global Cannabis Inc.

Vigilance Santé