

# Neighbourhood Pharmacies *Year in Review*

*Stepping Up  
Together*



2020



Neighbourhood  
Pharmacy  
Association of Canada

Association canadienne  
des pharmacies  
de quartier

# WELCOME TO OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Discover what our team has been up to over the past year. Read about our achievements and progress in serving our members, supporting the entire community pharmacy sector and delivering value to Canadians.

The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada (“Neighbourhood Pharmacies”) is the proud voice of pharmacy across the country. Pharmacies are a vital pillar of our country’s healthcare system, playing an integral and growing role in caring for Canadians.

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# COMMUNITY PHARMACIES: DOING MORE THAN EVER



During a challenging time defined by a global pandemic, pharmacies were at the forefront of protecting and supporting Canadians. From coast to coast to coast, pharmacies stepped up like never before – for their communities, frontline employees, and the public healthcare system – proving their effectiveness as the first line of defence during a prolonged crisis. Neighbourhood Pharmacies is proud to represent such a robust and critical sector for Canadians.

**11,000**

Community pharmacies across the country

**35,000+**

Pharmacy professionals in community pharmacies

**5km**

95 per cent of Canadians live within five kilometers of a community pharmacy

**10X**

Canadians see their pharmacist up to ten times more frequently than any other healthcare provider

**3rd Largest**

Pharmacists represent the third largest group of healthcare providers in Canada, after nurses and physicians

**5.6 Million**

Influenza vaccines ("flu shots") administered by pharmacies in the 2020/21 season – a new record

## A GROWING RANGE OF PHARMACY SERVICES FOR CANADIANS

 Patient Education

 Medication Management and Distribution

 Chronic Disease Management

 Health Promotion and General Health Screening

 Immunizations and Vaccine Distribution

 COVID-19 Testing

 Patient Counselling - In Person and Virtually



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

### Stepping up to demonstrate pharmacy's role in delivering sustainable healthcare

Although 2020 – and the all-consuming COVID-19 pandemic – unleashed unimaginable uncertainty upon our lives, it also provided an unexpected opportunity for key elements of our society to step up, demonstrate their strengths and offer hope that a better future is possible.

In particular, community pharmacies and their pharmacy teams, united with the support of the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada, rose to the challenge, helping individual Canadians and our health system partners manage through a once-in-a-lifetime crisis. We showed that we are ready to play a bigger, more integrated role in building a better, more efficient, and effective healthcare system.

### 2020: A transformative year for community pharmacy

Looking back to the early days of the pandemic, when so many unknowns stirred fear and panic, community pharmacies emerged as leaders within the healthcare system. While physicians' offices were forced to close and operate virtually and other healthcare channels faced steep demand, we continued to ensure Canadians had access to their medicines and we offered trusted health guidance to the public through 11,000 locations.

As the months passed, government agencies looked to us to help develop timely solutions. And we proactively identified many – efficiently rolling-out COVID-19 testing and ramping up influenza vaccinations and medication management programs. I am so moved by the myriad ways our members stepped up, created safe environments for their employees, and served as viable community healthcare hubs at the centre of a health emergency.

I am equally proud of our associates in the supply chain who worked across sectors and borders to ensure Canadians have access to medicines, and that critical research on therapies and vaccines continued at an astounding pace.

I also want to commend my team at Neighbourhood Pharmacies. The team creatively carried out extensive information, education, and advocacy work, including much-in-demand webinars and email bulletins to keep members informed. We hosted two virtual events – our Virtual Fall Conference and Virtual Specialty Pharmacy Summit – to help the business of pharmacy carry on.



At a time when it was more important than ever to show the value of our Association, we reaffirmed our place among strategic decision-makers. We helped create capacity in the public health system, earned a greater role for pharmacy and, as a result, made significant progress for our members.

### **Our innovative, collaborative spirit pushes us forward together**

As I reflect on the past 12 months, in which I served my first full year at the helm of this Association, our shared accomplishments confirm our collaborative and transparent approach is working. For example, we demonstrated that multi-stakeholder teamwork at many levels was the solution to the drug supply challenges our country faced. Our level of collaboration with groups like the Canadian Pharmacists Association and provincial pharmacy associations also intensified. We are communicating and coordinating like never before.

My overarching goal is, and always has been, to continue to promote this genuine co-operation across the pharmacy spectrum, to effect positive change for our business, our profession and our patients. And, recognizing that it requires a concerted combination of tactics to reach large goals, we will continue to pursue multi-pronged advocacy strategies, involving our members and associates directly in our government relations and community outreach. This approach will be critical as we face our priorities for the year ahead, including national pharmacare, pharmaceutical supply, medical cannabis, and creating capacity in public health and primary care through expanded scope for pharmacy professionals.

The extraordinary initiative and performance of community pharmacy in 2020 highlights our expertise, versatility and, above all, our dedication to delivering accessible, uninterrupted patient care. I am humbled by the opportunity to represent you, and I am profoundly confident in pharmacy's ability to innovate, collaborate and offer solutions across the healthcare system to benefit Canadians from coast to coast to coast.



Sandra Hanna, RPh  
CEO

Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada

# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

2020 was a big year for the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada.



**6,537 pharmacies**  
in Canada were  
represented by  
Neighbourhood  
Pharmacies



**Helped secure COVID-19  
testing**  
at community pharmacies  
in Alberta and Ontario



**545 pharmacy industry  
leaders**  
participated virtually in our  
two industry events,  
building their networks  
and expertise



**Advanced pharmacy business  
priorities**  
through more than 550  
meetings held with  
government officials, members  
and associates, industry  
associations and other  
stakeholders



**Helped gain new or expanded  
services for pharmacies  
during the pandemic,**  
including broader prescriptive  
authority, COVID-19 testing and  
wider vaccine administration in  
many jurisdictions



**Issued six research  
publications**  
covering industry hot topics –  
such as the growing role of the  
specialty pharmacy sector and  
the capabilities of pharmacies  
in distributing COVID-19  
vaccines



**787 pharmacy  
professionals**  
gained timely insights  
through our series of 18  
**COVID-19: In the Know**  
webinars









**Garnered positive media  
coverage and millions of  
impressions**  
through proactive and  
ongoing media outreach  
and interviews, focused on  
profiling pharmacy and our  
advocacy priorities



**Launched our own  
thought-leadership  
magazine, the  
Neighbourhood  
Pharmacy Gazette,**  
with more than 1,100  
subscribers

## KEY ISSUES IN 2020:

-  Immunizations: Pushing for an Expanded Role for Pharmacy
-  Championing a Larger Role for Pharmacy: Expanded Scope of Practice
-  COVID-19 Testing: Promoting Access Through Pharmacy
-  National Pharmacare: Seeking Coverage for All Canadians
-  Pharmaceutical Supply and Drug Shortages
-  Helping Pharmacies with Operational Issues

# ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES





As we all know, 2020 was a year like no other. But Neighbourhood Pharmacies stayed focused on moving the needle on critical priorities for Canada's community pharmacy sector.

We continued our vigorous advocacy behind the scenes in virtual forums and through significant media and stakeholder outreach. Our work highlighted the role of pharmacy as a key player in the healthcare system and pushed to broaden pharmacy professionals' scope of practice.

These efforts achieved real progress, helping to address several current issues, and paving the road for long-term success. Decision-makers at both the federal and provincial levels heard our messages, as evidenced by a number of policy changes and new initiatives benefitting the sector at large. We also boosted awareness among Canadians of local pharmacies' value and service, especially through the uncertain times resulting from the pandemic.

## A strategic, multi-pronged approach

Our advocacy continues to be based on a multi-pronged approach. It encompasses:

-  Proactive engagement with federal and provincial policymakers and payors (public and private) – via calls, emails, meetings, written letters, submissions and more.
-  Collaboration with stakeholders in the healthcare system. We work closely with provincial pharmacy associations (PPAs) and the Canadian Pharmacy Association (CPhA), as well as supply chain partners such as the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA), Innovative Medicines Canada (IMC) and the Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management (CAPDM) through the Cross-Sector Association Group.
-  Media relations, such as interviews, articles and news releases showcasing the unique role of pharmacy.
-  Expanded and increasingly strategic social media communications.



## ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES IMMUNIZATIONS: PUSHING FOR AN EXPANDED ROLE FOR PHARMACY

In 2020, immunizations quickly emerged as the hot topic, especially with public concerns over the second wave of COVID-19 pushing healthcare systems to the limit. Neighbourhood Pharmacies seized opportunities to profile pharmacies' capabilities to deliver immunizations to Canadians in three areas:

- COVID-19 vaccines.
- the seasonal influenza vaccine (flu shot).
- routine vaccinations for adults and children.

We urged governments to consider the increased role pharmacies can play in the distribution and provision of vaccines. We positioned Neighbourhood Pharmacies as the go-to stakeholder to engage in these areas. Our team harnessed media interviews (e.g., CTV, CP24, CHCH, Global Radio 640) and published the [COVID-19 Vaccine Readiness and Pharmacy Capabilities Report](#) in collaboration with CPhA.

- In B.C., we advanced discussions relating to a modernized distribution system for immunizations. Our report, Cost Comparison of Vaccine Distribution Options in British Columbia, was widely shared and helped to bring the issue to the attention of B.C. PharmaCare and other policymakers. We also contributed to discussions leading to a 20 per cent increase in the B.C. vaccine administration fee.
- In Ontario, our interactions with government officials resulted in the modernization of vaccine distribution across the province. Our efforts also enabled pharmacists to administer vaccines to children two years and older (down from five years), to administer vaccines within the pharmacy, and to access provincial PPE stocks to administer flu shots.

## RESULTS & IMPACTS

- ✓ 5.6 million influenza vaccines (flu shots) administered nationally by pharmacy in 2020/21 season – a new record. Pharmacists in many provinces are now the most common immunizer
- ✓ Québec pharmacists administered influenza vaccines for the first time in 2020 with a hugely successful campaign – administering 900,000 doses in the first year
- ✓ All provincial and federal policymakers are engaging pharmacy stakeholders to play a key role in the administration and distribution of COVID-19 vaccine
- ✓ Changes to vaccine distribution under consideration in B.C.





# ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES

## CHAMPIONING A LARGER ROLE FOR PHARMACY: EXPANDED SCOPE OF PRACTICE

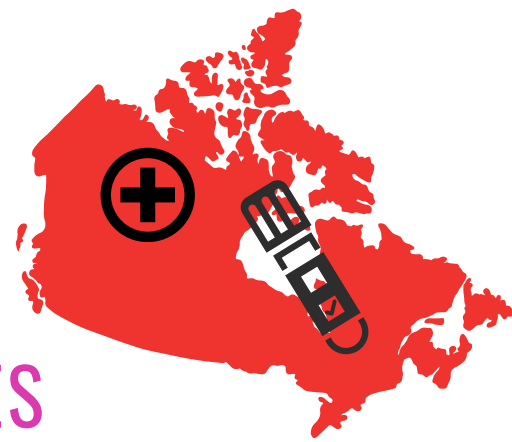
This past year we engaged in ongoing federal and provincial advocacy to modernize the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA), to enable broader scope opportunities for pharmacists to support patients and communities with respect to opioid use and misuse. This would further enable pharmacists in their opioid stewardship role as the country's opioid crisis continues to pose an even greater challenge within the current pandemic. These efforts to modernize the CDSA are part of our Association's broader advocacy related to expanding pharmacists' scope of practice.

We also pressed ahead to increase pharmacies' role in overall opioid stewardship activities, including caring for patients with opioid use disorder, supporting care for patients on opioid agonist therapy, and engaging in harm reduction initiatives such as providing naloxone. The pandemic prompted the federal government to enable a temporary Section 56 class exemption under the CDSA (now extended to September 2021), to allow pharmacists to extend prescriptions, transfer prescriptions to other pharmacies, receive verbal orders and permit other pharmacy employees to deliver controlled substances to homes or other locations. We encouraged the federal government to make this change permanent. And as noted above, to further support some of our most vulnerable Canadians in communities across the country, we encouraged the federal government to further modernize the CDSA to permit broader scope for pharmacists in key areas of prescribing for opioids and controlled substances.

- As part of our larger strategy around achieving scope expansion and prescribing authority, Manitoba announced pharmacists can prescribe medication for uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs). This change is a direct result of our ongoing engagement with the Minister of Health and Deputy Minister of Health in the province. Building on the announcement, we continued to engage with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Health in Manitoba to advance discussions further and ensure pharmacy is positioned to meet patients' needs regarding UTIs and other minor ailments.
- In Ontario, we educated, informed, and engaged on vaccinations, helping expand pharmacists' role in administering vaccinations by changing the minimum age from five years to two years. We also worked to move pharmacists forward on minor ailments prescribing, submitting a set of draft regulations for review and consideration by the Ministry of Health.

## RESULTS & IMPACTS

- ✓ Supported the temporary Section 56 class exemption to the CDSA, creating an expanded prescribing role for pharmacists during the pandemic
- ✓ Garnered provincial support for modernizing the CDSA and making Section 56 exemption permanent at the federal level
- ✓ Successfully prompted changes to the minimum age for pharmacist-administered vaccines in Ontario



# ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES

## COVID-19 TESTING: PROMOTING ACCESS THROUGH PHARMACY

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Neighbourhood Pharmacies has consistently highlighted the important role pharmacies can play in COVID-19 testing, in support of both rapid point of care and lab-based testing capacity. Increased testing is critical to limit the spread of COVID-19. We worked with government and PPAs to advocate for allowing pharmacies to provide asymptomatic COVID-19 testing.

In Ontario, for instance, we deployed a multi-pronged approach – leveraging government outreach, media opportunities and a digital campaign featuring a "More tests in more places" video message – to amplify our message. In collaboration with the Ontario Pharmacists Association, our advocacy ultimately resulted in the provincial government partnering with pharmacies to expand free access to COVID-19 testing. We continue to engage federally and provincially to further the role of pharmacies in COVID-19 testing.


## RESULTS & IMPACTS

- ✓ Close to 5,200 voters from every riding in Ontario emailed their MPP asking for pharmacies to deliver asymptomatic testing
- ✓ 2.2M YouTube and 1.8M Facebook and Instagram impressions, from social media campaign
- ✓ COVID-19 testing programs launched in Ontario and Alberta pharmacies




# ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES

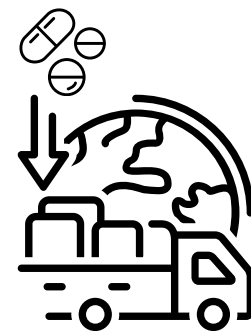
## NATIONAL PHARMACARE: SEEKING COVERAGE FOR ALL CANADIANS

In 2020, we refreshed our national pharmacare campaign, [Complete the Plan](#), to reflect the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and achieve our goal for all Canadians to have affordable access to medicines and medication services, regardless of income. While federal attention to this issue effectively halted at the onset of COVID-19, we remained focused on this key priority, monitoring discussions both in the media and at various levels of government.

-  We pressed forward with a third round of public opinion polling to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on Canadians' perspectives on national pharmacare.
-  We continued to urge the federal government to work with provincial governments to identify ways to provide drug coverage to those who need it most – Canadians who lack prescription drug plans – while ensuring continuous coverage for those who have it.

## RESULTS & IMPACTS

-  Advanced awareness about national pharmacare among all levels of government
-  Refreshed our policy position on pharmacare to reflect the impacts of COVID-19
-  Conducted and released robust public opinion polling results to support ongoing advocacy on national pharmacare



## ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY AND DRUG SHORTAGES

Drug shortages are an increasingly serious concern in the Canadian healthcare system. Over 1,000 shortages are reported to Health Canada every year, and one in four Canadians have experienced or know someone who has experienced a personal impact as a result of a drug shortage in the last three years. During 2020, Neighbourhood Pharmacies continued to monitor and take part in discussions around pharmaceutical supply chain issues – such as the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB) Reform and U.S. drug importation. We engaged at every opportunity, with formal submissions and letters throughout the year, and supported the sector with insights and analyses on impacts of proposed PMPRB reforms.

- 🌍 We encouraged ongoing dialogue and collaboration between all stakeholders, including Health Canada's Multi-stakeholder Steering Committee on Drug Shortages, and the Cross Sector Associations Group.
- 🌍 Through various advocacy activities, we called for pharmacy's involvement in government deliberations on drug shortages, to address supply issues and identify alternatives.
- 🌍 Through Neighbourhood Pharmacies' role on the steering committee of the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP) Canada, we also actively advocated against U.S. importation programs that threaten the supply of Canada's medicines, which ultimately led to an Interim Order by the federal government against U.S. importation.

## RESULTS & IMPACTS

- ✓ PMPRB reform delayed several times to encourage ongoing stakeholder engagement on the impacts of the reforms
- ✓ We helped raise awareness of pharmacies' critical role in safeguarding the pharmaceutical supply for Canadians
- ✓ Our submissions through ASOP Canada ultimately led the Canadian federal government to establish an Interim Order against U.S. importation of Canadian drugs



## ADVOCATING FOR PHARMACIES

### HELPING PHARMACIES WITH OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Throughout the year, we demonstrated our collaborative approach by helping community pharmacies with operational issues, in large part related to the pandemic. We worked alongside our provincial pharmacy association colleagues and other healthcare stakeholders to ensure community pharmacies were equipped and able to serve Canadians.

- 🌍 We undertook thorough research to identify the measures taken and investments made by community pharmacies as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Our findings, published in the report *Pharmacy's Response to COVID-19*, showed the significant one-time and ongoing costs to remain open and safely serve patients. These analyses were shared and leveraged by Neighbourhood Pharmacies as well as by CPhA and the provincial associations to support their advocacy.
- 🌍 In Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, we stressed the importance of access to PPE, and to childcare services for pharmacy staff, eventually leading to pharmacy staff having access to these products and services. In Saskatchewan, we also collaborated with the Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan to identify priorities for pharmacy operators and submitted feedback to the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals on its proposed Pharmacy Manager Supplemental Policy.
- 🌍 In Ontario, we educated government on pharmacy's response to COVID-19. We were instrumental in discussions that led to regulatory amendments to the Ontario Drug Benefits Program, providing co-payment support to Ontarians affected by the 30-day supply policy.

## RESULTS & IMPACTS

- ✓ Increased pharmacy access to PPE and childcare services throughout the pandemic
- ✓ Helped secure co-payment support for Ontario Drug Benefits recipients affected by 30-day supply policy
- ✓ Generated broader public awareness of the sector's investments to ensure pharmacies can safely operate during COVID-19



## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

### Chain Drug Review

Pharmacy Outlook

January 2020

Innovating Canada

When Pharmacies Are  
Healthy, We Can Help You Stay

Healthy

March 2020

N | A | T | I | O | N | A | L



The pharmacy's growing  
role in Canadians' lives

August 2020

CTV NEWS

Benefits of COVID-

19 Testing

September 2020



Highlighting Flu Vaccine  
Distribution through

Pharmacies

September 2020

### Chain Drug Review

Pandemic Can't  
Slow Drug Chain's

Momentum

September 2020

CTV NEWS

Importance of  
COVID-19 Vaccine

Deployment

December 2020





## EDUCATING AND CONNECTING ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Neighbourhood Pharmacies is well known for the industry-leading events we host each year. We didn't let the COVID-19 pandemic stop us from continuing these much-anticipated events. In 2020, we moved our in-person events to digital forums. We capitalized on the best virtual event technology in the business to maintain the integrity of these forums, delivering the high-calibre content, thought leadership and networking opportunities our members expect from us. Members were eager to participate and were impressed with how quickly we adapted to online delivery.



We hosted our inaugural **Specialty Pharmacy Summit** from September 22 to 23, 2020. It was the first event of its kind in the Canadian industry to raise awareness around the issues that matter to the rapidly evolving specialty pharmacy sector. The event drew 265 attendees – more than triple the number expected.

The online, interactive event featured panel discussions and dynamic breakout sessions, as well as opportunities for open-forum discussions with speakers and panelists. Presentations covered a range of topics, including:

-  Findings from our Specialty Pharmacy Report.
-  The future of biosimilars in Canada.
-  The future of patient support programs.
-  The role of pharmacy in cell and gene therapies.



Nearly 300 industry leaders and stakeholders convened for Neighbourhood Pharmacies' first **Virtual Fall Conference** (formerly called Pharmacy EXPO). The event, held from October 26 to 30, 2020, focused on the wellness business – a timely theme as a growing number of Canadians are pursuing wellness solutions beyond simply physical health.

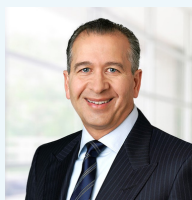
Participants discussed emerging consumer trends, industry developments and the opportunities for pharmacy expand into the wellness space. The event featured thought-leadership sessions, a virtual exhibit hall and virtual 1:1 business meetings. More than 430 valuable business meetings were held between our associates and retail members. There was also a "virtual happy hour" for networking and an award celebration for our 2020 Distinguished Associate of the Year and Len Marks Pharmacy Advancement recipients.

## COVID-19 IN THE KNOW

When the COVID-19 global calamity struck in early 2020, people were overwhelmed by uncertainty and pandemic-related news. Conflicting and vast amounts of information about COVID-19 flew fast and furious across media, government, business and community forums. We wanted to help our members and associates make sense of it all. Our **COVID-19: In the Know Webinar Series** tracked and addressed pandemic-related issues. Overall, 787 participants joined 18 webinars we hosted last year, gaining timely updates and fact-based insights from industry experts to help navigate the rapidly evolving environment.

## 2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS

### LEN MARKS PHARMACY ADVANCEMENT AWARD

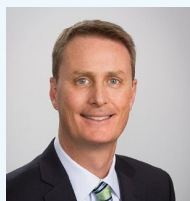


#### **Domenic Pilla, McKesson Canada**

Domenic Pilla was Chief Executive Officer of McKesson Canada from January 2017 until his retirement in August 2020. He oversaw the company's pharmaceutical distribution, specialty health, independent pharmacy, and retail pharmacy businesses, including Rexall, Well.ca, Medicentres, and Claimsecure. Although retired, Mr. Pilla has no intention of giving up his healthcare advocacy work. "This award fits my beliefs," he said. "Pharmacy is at the centre of our future and I will continue to support it."

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.

### DISTINGUISHED ASSOCIATE OF THE YEAR AWARD



#### **Martin Arès, Sandoz Canada**

Martin Arès is Vice-President, Bio-Generic Retail Channel (Pharmacies & Wholesalers), Head of Generics, and has been a member of the Sandoz Canada Executive Committee since June 2016. Mr. Arès is recognized as a passionate leader and strategic thinker. Through his collaborative style, he mobilizes teams to meet clear yet ambitious common objectives. Mr. Arès has been a key player in Sandoz Canada's evolution into a unique Bio-Generic company.

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.

## EDUCATING AND CONNECTING STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Our Association had an eventful, fast-paced year on the communications front. In response to the pandemic, we quickly adapted our communications strategy and awareness-building activities. We stepped up by providing frequent, proactive messaging to support pharmacy throughout COVID-19. Our goal? To keep all stakeholders informed on issues critical to our sector and Canadians' health.

### Media outreach

We continued to be the go-to voice on community pharmacy for media and other stakeholders. We enhanced our advocacy with extensive media outreach, especially around testing and immunizations for flu and COVID-19.

Neighbourhood Pharmacies closely monitored and directly engaged with media throughout 2020, issuing press releases and contributing our voice to national and regional conversations. Our CEO, Sandra Hanna, participated in critical media interviews drawing much-needed attention to the issues that matter to pharmacies – including COVID-19 testing, flu season and vaccinations. Through our CEO's participation in these hot-button media issues, Neighbourhood Pharmacies' voice was carried forward in interviews with a wide range of media, from CBC, CP24 and CHCH, to CTV, Global News Radio 640, and industry forums like the Canadian Healthcare Network. We were quoted in numerous media articles, and we crafted op-eds for The Globe and Mail, National Post and Toronto Star, among other news publications.

Our 2020 media campaign on COVID-19 testing and immunizations resulted in 35 unique media hits with a total reach of 10.7 million impressions. And our Ontario-specific campaign on asymptomatic COVID-19 testing in pharmacies resulted in 2.2 million impressions on YouTube and 1.8M impressions on Facebook and Instagram.

### Thought leadership

After identifying a gap in the publications landscape around matters relating to community pharmacy policy, operations, and business, we decided to create a thought-leadership quarterly dedicated exclusively to Canada's community pharmacy sector. Thus the [Neighbourhood Pharmacy Gazette](#) was born.

The digital magazine explores topics that matter to patients, stakeholders and decision-makers. Our inaugural issue, "We Stand on Guard for Thee", was published in September 2020. It focuses on pharmacy's role on the frontlines of COVID-19 and our work in public health and primary care. The November issue explored how pharmacy is embracing technologies to deliver care. The Gazette is poised for growth in 2021 as we look to expand its readership and continue delivering content that will be valued by our members, government, and stakeholders. [Click here to subscribe.](#)



### Position statements

Working with our members and associates in the latter half of 2020, Neighbourhood Pharmacies developed position statements on a group of priority issues for Canada's community pharmacy sector. We have prioritized seven issues in our statements:

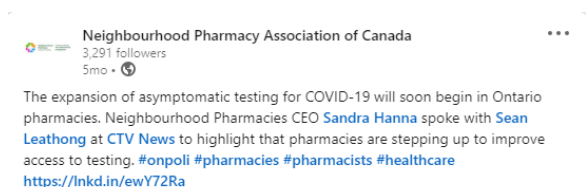
[public health](#), [primary care](#), [scope of practice](#), [medical cannabis](#), [drug shortages](#), [price compression](#), and [national pharmacare](#).

The statements, [available on our website](#), are intended for a broad audience and articulate our evidence-based perspectives on core pharmacy issues. In 2021, we will implement communications and stakeholder strategies to raise awareness of our positions on these advocacy priorities. The statements also establish a strong foundation for future initiatives of our grassroots advocacy program.



### Social media

In 2020, we set out to establish an enhanced presence for Neighbourhood Pharmacies on social media, and we achieved that goal. Our strategy is to use social media as an opportunity to showcase our Association's original content, lend our support to Neighbourhood Pharmacies' stakeholders, and amplify pharmacy's voice in all healthcare conversations. Social media will be a key area of expansion for us in 2021, where we can use these channels to actively engage on some of the most critical topics for pharmacy in a timely, impactful way.



### Refreshed communications on our advocacy activities

In 2020, weekly and biweekly communications were distributed to each of our members and associates to increase awareness of our federal and provincial advocacy and public relations activities. These communications include:

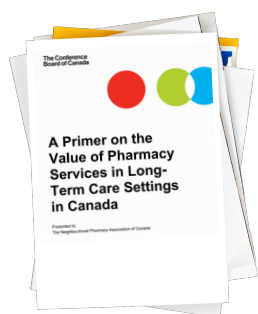
- 🌐 Daily media monitoring and reporting.
- 🌐 A customized news bulletin, **COVID-19: In the Know**, with a curated list of pandemic-related content from Canada and around the globe.
- 🌐 **Pharmacy Trends**, a bi-weekly publication for members and associates.

We also issued a quarterly recap, **From the Desk of the CEO**, discussing industry developments and initiatives underway at the Association.

## EDUCATING AND CONNECTING INSIGHTFUL RESEARCH

### Long-term care report

Before the pandemic, pharmacies played a critical role creating capacity in long-term care (LTC) facilities. Pharmacists are poised to do more to improve LTC residents' health outcomes. COVID-19's devastating impact on the LTC sector leaves no doubt that reform is overdue. Neighbourhood Pharmacies and the Conference Board of Canada released [A Primer on the Value of Pharmacy Services in Long-Term Care Settings in Canada](#) in February 2020.



The report observed that:

- New technologies have improved efficiencies in LTC pharmacies and generated more capacity for patient-centred care.
- The LTC pharmacy sector, and public and private payors, would benefit greatly from enhanced data and outcomes reporting.
- An aging population will steadily drive demand for pharmacists' services for LTC residents. Meeting the demand will require reforms to policies and programs, regulations and funding approaches.

### Specialty pharmacy report

Patients are increasingly turning towards specialty medications to treat debilitating illnesses such as cancer, hepatitis C and rheumatoid arthritis. The complexities of specialty pharmaceuticals create the need for advanced pharmacy services to support patients. In September 2020, Neighbourhood Pharmacies released [A Primer on the Value of Specialty Pharmacy Services for Patients and Healthcare Systems in Canada](#). The report examines the integral role of pharmacy, pharmacists and the pharmaceutical supply chain in managing the safety, effectiveness and administration of these complex specialty medications to best support patients in their communities.



### Research on Canadians' wellness attitudes

Neighbourhood Pharmacies commissioned WSL Strategic Retail to survey Canadians on their attitudes toward health and wellness and their perceptions of pharmacy. The results of the study, [The Big Business of WELL](#), were presented at our Virtual Fall Conference. Among the findings, 30 to 40 per cent of Canadian consumers want to know more about products and services that promote wellness. Canadians give pharmacy retailers higher scores on that front than they give to Amazon, in large part due to pharmacy's more personalized, caring approach.



### Research on Canadians' wellness attitudes



In the early days of COVID-19, we conducted research to highlight and quantify the pandemic's impact on community pharmacies across the country. We explored financial and non-financial challenges, as well as opportunities to successfully navigate through unprecedented times. While COVID-19 made life much harder for community pharmacies – dealing with PPE and drug supply shortages were among the challenges – pharmacies quickly adapted their practices and managed an

unprecedented volume of interactions with members of the public where access to other healthcare providers was limited. Our research findings were shared in a fact sheet, **Pharmacy's Response to COVID-19**. The insights were used to inform our Association's activities in the ensuing months and proved valuable to our members and provincial colleagues.

### Pharmacare in Canada

Working with Pollara Strategic Insights and Enterprise Public Relations, Neighbourhood Pharmacies completed polling to support our ongoing [Complete the Plan](#) national pharmacare campaign and strategy. Our polling results continue to support our position that a national pharmacare program should focus on those most in need and ensure all Canadians have access to drug coverage while building on the current public and private mix of payors. In 2021, we will continue to engage various stakeholders to build partnerships that will support proactive strategic advocacy on national pharmacare.



### COVID-19 vaccine readiness and pharmacy capabilities report





The pan-Canadian effort to establish vaccine distribution plans across the provinces is the largest mobilization effort in our country's history, and it comes with complications due to federal and provincial jurisdiction in healthcare delivery. As federal and provincial governments develop and release their vaccine deployment plans, a survey of Neighbourhood Pharmacies' members showed that Canada's pharmacy sector is ready to support the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines.

In collaboration with the CPhA, the survey results were used to develop a document entitled [COVID-19 Vaccine and Pharmacy Readiness](#), outlining the critical role that community pharmacies can play in successfully deploying the COVID-19 vaccine and supporting national efforts to immunize Canadians against COVID-19. The report and survey results help the entire pharmacy sector engage with COVID-19 vaccine deployment teams at the federal and provincial levels by demonstrating pharmacy's enormous capabilities.

# WHAT'S NEW AT THE ASSOCIATION




## New working groups

To advance our commitment to engage and connect with all our members and associates, in 2020 we formed two new working groups:

-  **Public Health Working Group** – We established this committee to tap into our associate partners' expertise and inform our immunization and COVID-19 testing efforts.
-  **Emergency Response Working Group** – We developed this working group to proactively advise the Association on the pandemic's impact on pharmacy and the roles that pharmacy can serve in various scenarios.

## Digital infrastructure

The Association's strong performance during the year was supported by a focus on modernizing and strengthening our internal digital infrastructure.

-  **Business dashboard:** We initiated the development of an interactive digital dashboard that will help us better track, interpret and present our Association's activities to the Board and members. Once completed, the dashboard will provide at-a-glance insights on key metrics and performance indicators.
-  **Online presence:** We improved the Association's online presence and worked on building a new, improved website for 2021. The site features a better layout and navigation, making it easier for members and other stakeholders to find relevant content.
-  **Annual events platform:** To support and ensure the success of our events, Neighbourhood Pharmacies adopted new digital platforms. These include the B2B2GO 1:1 meeting platform and the Pheedloop platform for our registration, event site and virtual event portal.

## Board updates

As of December 31, 2020, there were 14 members on our Board: eight men and six women. Board diversity is important to us, so we are pleased that the Board is achieving gender balance. [Click here](#) to view the full Board membership on our website.



**Rita Winn, Director, Lovell Drugs**

After many years of involvement in the Association's work, Rita is the new Vice-Chair of the Board.

Also, in 2020, we welcomed two new influential members to our Board of Directors:










**Marie-Claude Vézina**  
**Vice-President & General Manager**  
**Sobeys National Pharmacy Group**



**Smita Patil**  
**Senior Director, Industry Affairs**  
**McKesson Canada**



# 2020 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

2020 PRIORITIES	GOALS	2020 RESULTS
<b>National Pharmacare</b>	Implement next phase of Complete the Plan, including expanding grassroots advocacy.	 While the onset of the pandemic limited opportunities for grassroots advocacy on pharmacare, we crystalized our Complete the Plan position and updated supporting data through new public opinion polling – see page 11.
<b>Expanded Scope</b>	Work with governments and stakeholders to advance patient care and opportunities to expand the scope of pharmacists to support medication management, public health, and primary care more comprehensively for Canadians.	 Scope expansion achieved across the country – see page 9.
<b>U.S. Importation and Drug Shortages</b>	Engage federal government and stakeholders to communicate the importance of ensuring predictability in the supply of medications in Canada.	 Achieved the implementation of new regulations to protect Canadian pharmaceutical supply. The new regulations allow the Minister of Health to implement an Interim Order to protect the drug supply – see page 12.
<b>Pricing and Pharmacy Reimbursement</b>	<p>Closely monitor the development and implementation of new regulations around patented drug prices, and pharmacy reimbursement.</p> <p>Collaborate with industry stakeholders to engage in effective, coordinated advocacy to advance solutions for sustainable drug programs, and the continued success of our members and associates.</p>	 Achieved a delay in the implementation of PMPRB reform – see page 12.  Numerous collaborative efforts helped move the needle in this area – see pages 12 and 13.
<b>Medical Cannabis</b>	<p>Continue to emphasize the need to authorize pharmacies to dispense, distribute and counsel on medical cannabis and cannabis health products.</p> <p>Advocate for the removal of the excise tax on cannabis products used for medicinal purposes.</p>	 Engaged industry stakeholders to prepare a multi-pronged strategic approach leading up to the 2021 Cannabis Act review.
<b>Opioid Crisis</b>	<p>Advance concerted, multi-pronged solutions to the opioid epidemic.</p> <p>Focus on leveraging the expertise and accessibility of community pharmacists to support the delivery of better medication management for opioids, and better access to harm and risk reduction services.</p>	 Supported the temporary Section 56 class exemption to the CDSA, and garnered provincial support for permanent change – see page 9.



Achieved/Made significant progress



Made partial progress



Made minimal or no progress

## 2021 PRIORITIES

Neighbourhood Pharmacies has defined its key priorities heading into 2021, outlined below. We will leverage our partnerships, thought leadership and the momentum gained over the past year to achieve progress and success in the months to come.

### 2021 PRIORITIES

### GOALS

#### **COVID-19 Testing and Vaccinations**

Support pharmacies' engagement in COVID-19 testing and vaccination campaigns.

#### **National Pharmacare**

Continue to urge the federal government to implement a national pharmacare program, working with provincial governments to provide drug coverage to Canadians who need it most, while ensuring continuity of coverage for those who have it.

#### **Medical Cannabis**

Enable the sale of Cannabis Health Products (CHPs) in pharmacies, where pharmacists can provide advice and counselling on safe and effective use of these products.

#### **Opioid Crisis**

Urge the federal government to make permanent changes to the Section 56 temporary class exemptions to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA).

Advocate for modernization of the CDSA to expand scope for pharmacists in areas such as initiation of opioid agonist therapy and therapeutic substitution of opioids and controlled substances.

#### **Public Health**

Advocate for pharmacy's role creating capacity in public health, enabling pharmacists to deliver care beyond the pharmacy counter – harm reduction, health promotion, screening for chronic disease, and routine child and adult immunizations.

#### **Primary Care**

Advocate to enhance pharmacists' role in assessment and prescribing of minor ailments, and point of care testing, which would support an integral chronic disease management role that pharmacies play as community healthcare hubs, building capacity in primary care.

# ABOUT NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACIES

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. Together with its members and associates, Neighbourhood Pharmacies is driving innovative solutions through advocacy, networking, research and information services.

We support the full range of Canadian pharmacies – from chain, banner, long-term care and specialty pharmacies through to large grocery chains and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. On behalf of our members, we engage with federal and provincial governments, relevant healthcare organizations and other stakeholders to advance the pharmacy sector and deliver quality patient care.



## MISSION

We are solution-focused partners working collaboratively for a sustainable and competitive pharmacy industry serving the best interests of patients.



## VISION

Trusted thought leaders in healthcare successfully partnering to shape a healthier tomorrow.



## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

### Industry insights!

[Sign up for the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Gazette](#), the thought-leadership magazine of the community pharmacy sector in Canada!

### Save the Date!

Virtual Executive Summit | May 11-12, 2021

Pharmacy EXPO | October 5-7, 2021

### Join Now!

[Contact us](#) to find out how the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada can support your business

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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[Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada](https://www.neighbourhoodpharmacy.ca)

## MEMBERS



## ASSOCIATES

Abbott Laboratories Co. \*  
Amgen Canada Inc. \*  
Aphria Inc.  
Apotex Canada \*  
Ascensia Diabetes Care  
ASOP (Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies)  
AstraZeneca Canada Inc. \*  
AuroPharma Canada \*  
Aurora Cannabis Inc.  
BD Medical - Diabetes Care  
Canopy Growth Corporation \*  
Cospir Distribution Inc.  
Healthmark Ltd.  
HTL-Strefa  
Impres Pharma Inc.  
Inmar CLS Medturn  
IQVIA Solutions Canada Inc.  
Jamp Pharma Corp. \*  
Johnson & Johnson  
Jones Healthcare Group \*  
Kohl & Frisch Ltd.

Lifescan Canada Ltd. \*  
Mint Pharmaceuticals \*  
Mylan Pharmaceuticals ULC. \*  
Natco Pharma (Canada) Inc.  
Odan Laboratories Ltd.  
Omniceil, Inc.  
Pear Healthcare Solutions  
Pfizer Canada Inc. \*  
Pharmacy2Home \*  
Pharmacy Quality Solutions  
Pharmascience Canada \*  
Roche Diagnostics Canada  
Sandoz Canada Inc. \*  
Sanofi Pasteur Ltd.  
ScriptPro Canada Ltd.  
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Sterimax Inc.  
Teligent Inc.  
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Trudell Medical International  
Vigilance Santé