



Community Pharmacists Ask for Patients' Understanding on 30-Day Supplies of Medications

Ontario Pharmacists are Working Together with the Ministry of Health on COVID-19 Response to Ensure Continued Access to Medications for All Ontarians

March 22, 2020 (Toronto, Ont.) Pharmacy professionals across the province want to reassure Ontario patients that community pharmacies are here to support them during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While pharmacists and pharmacy technicians continue to have confidence in our national supply of prescription medication, they are seeing an increased strain on the system due to requests for increased prescription quantities. The majority of provincial governments, Ontario included, have opted to take a precautionary approach to limit quantities of most medications to 30-day supplies to ensure that all patients continue to have their medications. There may be some very limited circumstances where a greater supply is warranted.

"These are exceptional times. We know that patients are facing enormous challenges. Ontario pharmacists are here to ensure that our patients' continuity of care is not impacted. This requires protecting Ontario's drug supply," says Jen Baker, Chair of Ontario Pharmacists Association. "Limiting prescription medications is a necessary measure to avoid potential shortages."

Although limiting quantities may pose adjustments for patients and for pharmacies, the public can be assured that Ontario pharmacists will work with them to ensure they receive the care and medication they need.

The Ontario Pharmacists Association is exceptionally proud of the hard work all front-line healthcare professionals are providing, including all pharmacy professionals who are committed to providing care during these challenging times.

"Many pharmacies offer delivery services and will continue to bring their patients' medications directly to their homes, and not just for those under mandatory self-isolation," says Justin Bates, OPA's Chief Executive Officer.

"COVID-19 has placed a significant strain on all front-line healthcare sectors, pharmacy included. Demands on pharmacy team members are high, and yet they still show up to work every day on their patients' behalf to ensure that they can receive the continuity of care they absolutely require. We ask that patients work with their pharmacists to ensure that they can continue to receive their medications in a timely and safe manner," says Bates.

"Pharmacies are fully aware of the anxiety being felt by patients and encourage them to remain home while pharmacists take care of their medication needs. It's a full team effort across Ontario pharmacies. We are asking for patients' understanding at this time. We are all in this together and we'll get through this together," says Bates.

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About the Ontario Pharmacists Association

The Ontario Pharmacists Association is committed to evolving the pharmacy profession and advocating for excellence in practice and patient care. With more than 10,000 members, OPA is Canada's largest advocacy organization, and professional development provider for pharmacy professionals across Ontario. By leveraging the

unique expertise of pharmacy professionals, enabling them to practise to their fullest potential, and making them more accessible to patients, OPA is working to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the healthcare system. The pharmacy sector plays a strong role in Ontario with an economic impact of more than \$6.3 billion across more than 4,600 community pharmacies, employing 60,000 Ontarians.

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