



Fact Sheet

- The AIMS (Assurance and Improvement in Medication Safety) Program is a standardized medication safety and quality assurance program that will support continuous quality improvement and put in place a mandatory consistent standard for medication safety for all pharmacies in the province. Its goal: to reduce the risk of patient harm caused by medication incidents in, or involving, Ontario pharmacies.
- The program will enable pharmacy practitioners to learn from medication incidents, and better understand why they happen and how they can be prevented. The program addresses both incidents that reach the patient and those that are intercepted before reaching the patient (near misses).
- In February 2018, the College implemented the first phase of the implementation involving 100 volunteer community pharmacies to test and provide feedback on the various components prior to the province-wide roll out with a view to commencing full implementation by the end of 2018.
- The College is now rolling out the AIMS Program to all 4,300+ community pharmacies in the province which will begin onboarding to the program in November 2018 with completion expected by mid-2019.
- Once fully implemented, it will be the largest medication safety program for pharmacies of its kind in Canada. Hospital pharmacies, which already have medication safety and quality improvement mechanisms in place, will be onboarded to the program at a later date.
- The program focuses on four key mandatory components: anonymous reporting of medication incidents and near misses; effective documentation; analysis of the incidents; and quality improvement. It is built upon the principles of a safety culture, very similar to what exists in other parts of the health system.
- Data available through incident recording is an important part of the program. The College will receive aggregate, de-identified data through the incident recording platform (administered by our program partner, Pharmapod) and will work with various partners and experts to analyze the data and to regularly share insights regarding trends and opportunities for system-wide improvements. The first fulsome analysis of recorded incidents will be available once all pharmacies have onboarded to the program.
- Pharmacies will have access to their own incident information through the platform as well as aggregate provincial data and will use this information to make improvements and share learnings within their teams.
- The AIMS Program is just one component of the College's quality assurance initiatives such as practice assessments, pharmacy assessments and the ongoing development of strategies and standards aimed at promoting safe, quality pharmacy care in the province.
- In line with the well-established safety culture best practices, the incident data recorded through the third-party platform is completely anonymous; the College will not be able to identify individual pharmacies or pharmacy professionals through this program.
- While the AIMS Program is an important new requirement that aligns with the College's mandate to serve and protect the public, the program remains separate and distinct from its Investigations function. The College continues to take its regulatory responsibility to respond to concerns about the conduct or safety of individual pharmacies or pharmacy professionals very seriously. If anyone has a concern about the care provided by a pharmacy or pharmacy professional, they can report information to the College through its existing complaints process. The College will then follow-up accordingly.

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