

## **Ontario College of Pharmacists selects Pharmapod to implement medication error reporting system for Ontario pharmacies**

*Announcement marks a major milestone in what will be the largest medication safety program of its kind in Canada*

October 26, 2017 – Toronto, ON – The Ontario College of Pharmacists is pleased to announce its selection of Pharmapod Ltd to implement a medication error reporting system and standardized approach to continuous quality assurance in pharmacies throughout the province. The first phase of this medication safety program is set to roll out later this fall among at least 100 community pharmacies, with full implementation among the province's more than 4,000 community pharmacies set to commence in late 2018.

In June 2017, College Council unanimously endorsed the implementation of a medication safety program for Ontario's pharmacies. Among the core elements of this program is the introduction of a requirement for pharmacies and pharmacy professionals to anonymously report medication errors to a third party. Reasons behind medication incidents, including near misses, would be analyzed and shared throughout the province to prevent errors from recurring and, ultimately, protect patients.

Along with working with the College to develop all aspects of the medication incident reporting platform, Pharmapod will be responsible for providing training and continuous quality improvement processes and tools for Ontario pharmacies, analyzing provincial medication incident data and making available reports to individual pharmacies. The College will receive aggregate data which will help it understand and monitor trends and work with Pharmapod and other partners to share learnings and develop tools and resources to help pharmacies apply these learnings to their practice.

Pharmapod's alliance with the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) will support a successful implementation among pharmacies in Ontario and the sharing of information not just throughout the province but across the country.

With a letter of intent now completed, the College and Pharmapod will work together toward a formal agreement over the coming weeks. As this moves forward, the College will continue to explore opportunities to develop partnerships and collaborative initiatives with organizations such as the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) Canada and other patient-safety and regulatory groups in advancing a nation-wide focus on medication error prevention.

### **QUOTES**

*"Understanding why errors happen can help reduce the risk of recurrence and ultimately protect patients. Our goal, therefore, is the implementation of a comprehensive, practical and flexible continuous quality assurance program for pharmacies that will help reduce the risk of medication incidents and enhance patient safety. We believe Pharmapod's solution is an ideal choice for us as Canada's largest pharmacy regulator whose mission is to serve and protect the public. We also believe it is an ideal choice for Ontario's pharmacies, which will benefit from an innovative technical platform developed by pharmacy professionals for pharmacy professionals. We are very pleased to be moving forward with this important provincial patient-safety initiative and look forward to working with all of our partners in building a national medication safety data set that we all can benefit from."*

Nancy Lum-Wilson, CEO and Registrar, Ontario College of Pharmacists

*“Even a single event that can be prevented can have a significant impact on the lives of patients as well as pharmacy professionals. Ontario’s pharmacies and pharmacy professionals play an important role in our health system and this program will strengthen their role in helping patients have access to quality and safe health care. I lost my son Andrew to a medication error which is why I wanted to do what I could so that his legacy would be a safer healthcare system across the country. I’m proud to have been a part of this initiative and am very pleased that the College is making great progress toward this medication safety program becoming a reality in Ontario.”*

Melissa Sheldrick, patient safety advocate and public member of the College’s Medication Safety Task Force

## QUICK FACTS

- The medication safety program will support continuous quality improvement and put in place a mandatory consistent standard for responding to medication incidents.
- In addition to requiring the anonymous reporting of medication incident data (including near misses) to a third party, the medication safety reporting program will enable practitioners to learn from medication incidents and better understand why they happen and how they can be prevented.
- All incident data will be collected and maintained by the independent third party. The College will receive aggregate level data which will include an analysis of the root cause of medication incidents and trends. This information would then be shared as learnings for all pharmacies and pharmacy professionals to support continuous quality improvement plans aimed at preventing similar incidents from recurring.
- The program will be implemented in phases. The first phase will start this fall among at least 100 community pharmacies across the province. This approach will enable collaboration with and among pharmacies to ensure that learnings and insights from the first phase support a successful province-wide roll out later in 2018.
- There are currently 4,279 community pharmacies and 226 hospital pharmacies in the province.
- The implementation of Ontario’s medication safety program for pharmacies will make it the largest of its kind in the country.
- The selection of vendor followed a formal competitive RFP process in keeping with standard procurement practices. A total of five proponents submitted proposals. The seven-member evaluation team’s decision to move forward with the preferred proponent was unanimous.

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## About the Ontario College of Pharmacists

The Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP), incorporated in 1871, is the registering and regulating body for the profession of pharmacy in Ontario. The College’s mandate is to serve and protect the public and hold Ontario’s pharmacists and pharmacy technicians accountable to the established legislation, standards of practice, code of ethics and policies and guidelines relevant to pharmacy practice. The College also oversees the province’s community and hospital pharmacies and assesses them against prescribed standards of operation. For more information, visit [www.ocpinfo.com](http://www.ocpinfo.com).

## About Pharmapod Ltd.

The Pharmapod platform is a pioneering cloud-based solution designed to drive standards of patient safety across the pharmacy profession world-wide. Pharmapod empowers healthcare professionals to identify risks in their practice, share their learnings and prevent recurrence of patient harm. Pharmapod’s professionally led team offers in-depth domain knowledge and expertise of the industry. The platform has succeeded in creating a hugely positive network of pharmacy teams united in shared goals - real peer-to-peer sharing of experience and delivering excellence in patient care. For more information, visit [www.pharmapodhq.com](http://www.pharmapodhq.com).

### **About the Canadian Pharmacists Association**

The Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) is the unifying national voice of pharmacy and the pharmacist profession in Canada. As pharmacists undertake an enhanced role in the delivery of health care services, CPhA ensures that the profession is recognized as a national leader in health care, influencing the policies, programs, budgets and initiatives affecting the profession and the health of Canadians. For more information, visit [www.pharmacists.ca](http://www.pharmacists.ca).

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