



This feature in *Pharmacy Connection* is a place to find information about news stories we're following. Here, you'll read summaries of recent stories relating to pharmacy in Ontario and Canada. For the latest updates, stay tuned to e-Connect and www.ocpinfo.com

SEXUAL ABUSE TASK FORCE REPORT

On September 9, 2016, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care [released](#) the findings of the *Minister's Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Patients and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*. The task force was initially established in December 2014 after a number of high profile incidents of sexual abuse by regulated health professionals.

The task force put forward [34 different recommendations](#). The government has indicated that they will bring forward legislative amendments in the fall that would encompass some, but not all, of the recommendations. Proposed amendments include:

- expanding the list of acts that result in mandatory revocation of a license;
- increasing transparency on what colleges must report on their public register; and
- clarifying the time period after the end of a patient-provider relationship in which sexual relations are prohibited.

The ministry has also indicated that they will, in 2017, look to identify more ways for patients to participate in the complaints, investigation and discipline processes at health regulatory

colleges and enhance knowledge and education among the public, patients and health professionals.

HEALTH CANADA APPROVED NALOXONE NASAL SPRAY

On October 3, 2016, Health Canada approved naloxone (Narcan®) nasal spray for use in Canada as a non-prescription product.

Naloxone nasal spray must now be scheduled at the provincial and territorial level through the National Drug Schedules (NDS) program maintained by the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA). A scheduling submission for naloxone nasal spray was received and will be reviewed by the NDS Advisory Committee at their meeting on December 5, 2016. A final recommendation and modification to the NDS will be made by the end of 2016.

Until NAPRA scheduling is complete, pharmacists may continue to access naloxone through regular distribution channels or U.S. distributors as per [Health Canada's](#) requirements for importing and selling Narcan®. The Interim Order, signed by the Minister of Health on July 6, 2016, authorizes the importation, distribution, and sale of US approved naloxone nasal spray without a prescription.

Pharmacists can dispense any formulation of naloxone available for sale and distribution in Canada, as long as it is in accordance with all of the requirements outlined in the [College's Guidance – Dispensing or Selling Naloxone](#). It is the professional responsibility of a pharmacist to ensure that he or she has sufficient knowledge, skills and abilities to competently deliver any pharmacy service. The College has included links to [external training resources](#) for pharmacists to ensure they are prepared to safely and effectively provide naloxone to a patient or patient's agent.

[The Ontario Pharmacists Association](#) may be an additional source of information regarding sourcing supplies for pharmacy-assembled take-home naloxone kits.

OPIOID ADDICTION AND OVERDOSES

The issue of opioid dependency and overdose is an ongoing concern across Canada. According to data from the chief coroner's office, fentanyl was the number one cause of opioid-related deaths in Ontario in 2015. The number two cause of opioid-related deaths was hydromorphone.

In response to this growing crisis, the government of Ontario, in an October 12 news release—Ontario Taking Action to Prevent Opioid Abuse—revealed a number

of strategies to address opioid addiction and overdose. A few of these include:

- developing evidence-based standards for healthcare providers on appropriate opioid prescribing to help prevent unnecessary dispensing and over-prescribing;
- delisting high-strength formulations of long-acting opioids from the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary in January 1, 2017;
- expanding access to naloxone overdose medication, available free of charge for patients and their families to help prevent overdose deaths;
- increasing access to Suboxone addiction treatment and improving patient outcomes for those who use this treatment; and
- establishing the Patch for Patch program, which came into effect on October 1, 2016, and

which places new obligations on prescribers, dispensers and patients (for more on Patch for Patch, turn to [page 23](#)).

The full release is available in the Government of Ontario [newsroom](#).

REVISED OVER THE COUNTER ACETAMINOPHEN LABELLING REQUIREMENTS

Health Canada has released a revised labelling standard for over the counter acetaminophen products following stakeholder consultations last fall. The purpose of the revised labelling standard is to ensure “stronger, clearer” labels for over the counter acetaminophen products. Pharmacists should be aware of these new standards to ensure appropriate counselling for patients regarding over the counter acetaminophen products.

The revised standard indicates that:

- a dosing device be included with children’s liquid formulations;

- the principal display panel of product labels include the declaration “Contains acetaminophen” in red text with a white background, in bold, size 10 font;
- labels emphasize the importance of using the lowest effective dose and heeding the maximum daily dose of 4 grams per day, or eight tablets of extra-strength (500mg) acetaminophen; and
- a new template for the Drug Facts Table for acetaminophen products be incorporated – once the requirement for all products to have a Drugs Fact Tables comes into force.

Although discussed during the consultation period, Health Canada decided not to make changes to the maximum daily dose or maximum unit dose for acetaminophen products. **Pc**

CURRENTLY SEEKING FEEDBACK ON NON-STERILE COMPOUNDING STANDARDS

OCP is currently seeking feedback on the Model Standards for Pharmacy Compounding of Non-Sterile Preparations developed by the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA). All pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who engage in non-sterile compounding are invited to review these standards and provide feedback.

Comments received during the 30-day consultation, ending Thursday November 17 will be considered by the College for its feedback submission to NAPRA early in December. NAPRA will review the submissions from all pharmacy regulators across the country and determine what changes to make to these draft standards, if any. Once NAPRA finalizes the standards, OCP council will consider the timing of their implementation.

To share your feedback on the standards, visit the [Consultations](#) page on the OCP website.