

CPhA National Survey: Canadians trust pharmacists and support their enhanced role in the delivery of quality care and services



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FOR PHARMACIST AWARENESS MONTH 2015, THE Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) commissioned a national survey to determine Canadians' perceptions and attitudes toward pharmacists and the range of health care services they provide. The survey, conducted by Abacus Data from February 14 to 22, 2015, with a sample of 2937 Canadians, yielded a range of positive results, demonstrating the high level of trust and confidence Canadians place in pharmacists.

The number and scope of services that pharmacists can provide to patients has increased significantly over the past several years, and the survey results demonstrate that Canadians continue to support these expanded services. A large majority of Canadians trust pharmacists to provide advice on vaccinations (88%), the management of chronic conditions (88%), healthy lifestyle changes such as smoking cessation and weight loss (91%) and the management of common ailments like the cold or flu (94%). This high level of trust reflects the expanding role pharmacists are undertaking—and being recognized for—in the delivery of health care in Canada.

Canadians not only trust pharmacists to provide a range of health care services, but according to the survey results, they are also very likely to use them. When asked whether or not they would consider going to their pharmacist to receive health care services, a majority indicated that they would consider going to their pharmacist for a flu shot or other vaccine (79%), for advice on medications (89%), for an appointment to review and discuss medications (82%), for smoking cessation advice (75%), for prescribing medications for minor health conditions (78%), for screening for medical

conditions such as diabetes (66%) and for advice on the management of chronic disease such as diabetes or hypertension (69%).

Canadians also make the connection between an expanded role for pharmacists and better health outcomes. Ninety-six percent of respondents had a positive impression of pharmacists, and 82% believed that pharmacists play a central or important role in the delivery of health care. Most Canadians agree that expanding the role of pharmacists would improve patients' overall quality of life (82%), reduce overcrowding in emergency rooms and walk-in clinics (85%) and reduce overall health care costs (79%). Canadians clearly agree that the health care system would be improved by further enhancing the role of pharmacists in the delivery of health care services.

Pharmacist Awareness Month is an opportunity to celebrate pharmacists and educate Canadians on the contribution that pharmacists make in the delivery of quality health care. The tagline for 2015, "Pharmacists: Trusted Care When and Where You Need It," conveys the message that pharmacists are not only trusted leaders in the provision of frontline care but, as one of the most accessible health care providers in Canada, are able to provide quality care conveniently and quickly—a message that is clearly demonstrated in these survey results.

More information about the survey, including province-specific results, can be located on the Pharmacist Awareness Month website at www.pharmacists.ca/pam. ■

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