

**Ensuring a Safe Supply of Essential Medications and Healthcare Supplies to  
Canadians During COVID-19  
April 9, 2020**

*Open letter to pharmaceutical stakeholders from Daniel Chiasson, President & CEO  
The Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management (CAPDM)*

CAPDM proudly represents Canada's healthcare distributors who together supply medications and healthcare essentials to Canadian hospitals and pharmacies from coast to coast to coast.

**A strong pharmaceutical supply chain is there today and every day to ensure Canadians can access necessary medications and health products**

Throughout the current COVID-19 pandemic, CAPDM, its distributor members and pharmacy partners continue to work tirelessly to maintain Canada's strong pharmaceutical supply chain, ensuring essential medications and supplies are delivered to patients across Canada when they need them.

**COVID-19 has led to unprecedented pressures on supply**

Over the last number of weeks, we've seen unprecedented spikes in demand for certain pharmaceutical and healthcare products. We've seen volumes increase by over 200% of normal demand, driven primarily by massive spikes in consumer behaviour, paired with global supply disruptions as a result of COVID-19. This has placed enormous pressure on Canada's supply chain partners. If left unchecked, this could lead to the increasing likelihood of drug shortages.

To proactively mitigate this, many distributors quickly implemented safeguarding measures with Canadian manufacturer partners to more effectively close the gap between supply and demand. This includes implementing order controls on customers, as well as manufacturer allocations based on supply.

**Shifting from 90-day prescription refills to 30-day is a necessary temporary measure**

Canada's national and provincial pharmacy associations, provincial governments and public health officials have urged Canadians to temporarily shift from requesting 90-day prescription refills to 30-day. **We strongly support this policy.**

The shift from 90-day prescription refills to 30-day enables the broader pharmaceutical supply chain community to better manage supply. These are necessary measures to effectively counter the substantial increase in demand and protect supply for Canadians in the short and medium-term.

## **Patients should not be adversely impacted**

COVID-19 is placing a strain on the financial, physical, and mental health of Canadians. Pharmacy dispensing fees play an essential role in allowing pharmacists and their staff to provide quality care and services to patients, and we respect the critical role pharmacists play as key front-line care providers during these uncertain times.

We recognize that this policy may introduce varying financial pressures on end patients. We believe impacts on vulnerable patients should be taken into consideration, and are pleased to see governments across Canada actively working to address this.

## **Let me be clear: In these extraordinary times, Canada's pharmaceutical supply chain is strong and we are here today and every day to keep Canadians healthy and safe**

Canadians should continue to buy medications and health products responsibly; Canadians do not need to buy more than necessary. This practice will help ensure that Canadians continue to have access to the medications they need, when they need them.

Harnessing the partnership between distributors, manufacturers, pharmacies and governments will ensure we continue to flatten the curve of demand, and in turn equitably distribute product with the goal of serving the largest number of patients.

Let's continue to work together and give every patient access to medications and essential healthcare products.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Chiasson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel Chiasson, President and CEO

Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management (CAPDM)

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### **Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management**

3800 Steeles Ave W • Suite 301A • Woodbridge • ON • L4L 4G9  
Tel: (905) 265-1706 • Fax: (905) 265-9372 • [capdm@capdm.ca](mailto:capdm@capdm.ca) • [www.capdm.ca](http://www.capdm.ca)