



Saskatchewan patients benefit from flu shots administered conveniently and safely at community pharmacies

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With more than 84,000 flu shots administered so far this season by pharmacists, Saskatchewan residents are relying more on the contribution of pharmacists to help serve community needs for safe, convenient health care including vaccination services.

In the 2015-16 flu season, the first year that Saskatchewan pharmacies offered vaccination services, over 56,000 flu shots were successfully administered by provincial pharmacists, and that number is expected to grow significantly this year.

“Pharmacists view their investment in expanded services as part of growing their contribution to health care,” said Dawn Martin, Chief Executive Officer of the Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan (PAS). “Offering convenient, local access to preventive health services like vaccinations is part of how we are advancing both the quality of care and the efficiency of our health care system.”

Three quarters of the province’s pharmacists have earned Advanced Method Certification, following in-depth training with the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals (SCPP), which allows them to administer injections. In expanding the enabling legislation in 2015, Saskatchewan joins BC and AB (2009), NB (2010), ON (2012), and NS (2013) in a public policy change to improve access and care for millions of provincial residents.

Saskatchewan Health pays community pharmacies to administer flu vaccinations. The Province sets a rate per dose to compensate pharmacists fairly for their investment in new capabilities and for providing flu shots for patients closer to their home communities, conveniently and safely.

“In Saskatchewan, about 35 per cent of the population lives in a rural setting, and community pharmacies are the only health care provider in about 80 communities,” said Martin. “Having hometown pharmacies administer seasonal flu vaccines allows patients to save the time to commute to hospitals, clinics, and doctors’ offices, which may be located hours away.”

The Canadian Community Health Survey reports another benefit: vaccination rates are higher in provinces where pharmacists are part of the immunization team.

“This helps reduce human suffering, lost time at school and work, and improves system efficiency, while keeping quality high and care affordable,” said Martin. “It’s such a good feeling to know that our pharmacists are helping Saskatchewan communities stay healthier during flu season.”

For more information:

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