

Notable growth in flu shots administered by pharmacists this season and trust in province's pharmacists remains high

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As we celebrate Pharmacists Awareness Month (PAM) across Canada, residents in Saskatchewan are becoming more aware of the sector's role in health care, and acting on that knowledge.

Annual research was conducted in February 2017 by Abacus Data for the Canadian Pharmacists Association¹. Of those surveyed, 34% who reported that they had obtained a flu shot did so at their local pharmacy—up 9% from 2016, when 25% were vaccinated at their pharmacy

“This is one indicator that Saskatchewan residents are becoming more aware of the access and convenience of obtaining such care through their local pharmacy,” said Dawn Martin, Chief Executive Officer, Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan (PAS). “It also reflects the level of trust our communities place in pharmacy professionals to provide this expanded level of health care.”

The research asks residents for their perspectives on awareness of the roles and capabilities of pharmacists, and the level of trust they place in health care professions generally, and pharmacists specifically. Some highlights:

- The percentage of those who expressed a desire to obtain vaccinations from their pharmacist increased from 63% in 2016 to 68% in 2017.
- For flu shots, the numbers are more striking: in 2016, 68% of respondents said they'd be very-to-somewhat likely to consider obtaining their annual flu shot from a pharmacist, and in 2017, 75% responded they would be open to it.
- Support for expanding the role of pharmacists remains strong: 82% of respondents believe that expanded scope for pharmacists means better outcomes for patients, and 83% believe that allowing pharmacists to do more will help reduce costs of health care in Saskatchewan, a level that is holding steady from 2016.
- Just over six in 10 respondents view pharmacists as essential to the healthcare system, above the national average of 57%, and 97% of provincial respondents have an enduring positive view of the profession.
- Saskatchewan residents trust advice from their pharmacists with respect to vaccinations (90%), advice on medicines (90%), services relating to the management of certain chronic health

¹ Methodology: The 2017 online survey was conducted between February 10 and 18, 2017, among a representative sample of Canadians, 500 from Saskatchewan, from a *Research Now* panel with a margin of error of $\pm 4.5\%$ for the Saskatchewan sample size.

conditions (91%) , healthy lifestyle changes (95%), and management of common ailments such as colds or flu (96%).

“This year’s research findings reflect both our community’s high level of trust for pharmacists and a steadily growing acceptance of expanded services now available in many pharmacies across the province,” said Martin. “As pharmacists expand our healthcare contribution across our communities, our health care system is strengthened, and we all benefit.”

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