

April 22, 2020

Ontario Ministry of Health is recommending pharmacists dispense no more than 30 days' supply of medications at a time.

Leading up to and after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, pharmacies experienced higher demand for early refills and larger quantities. This put an early strain on the supply chain in Canada. Further, many of the source material for medications come from India and China. India enforced a multi-week production shut down which placed further strain on the global supply chain. Pharmacy associations, pharmacies and governments are in regular contact with pharmaceutical manufacturers and wholesalers to gain insight into supply trends and it was the collective assessment of industry and government that a temporary policy was necessary to limit medications to 30 days in order to protect and maintain the supply chain to mitigate worsening of long-standing shortages while preventing future ones from developing.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has increased demand for medication and supplies around the world. Pharmacies must carefully manage their medication inventories so all Canadians can access their medications and shortages can be avoided. Although this situation can be challenging, everyone is in this together.

Everyone is asked to stop and consider the healthcare professional on the other side of the pharmacy counter. Like all healthcare providers – who are putting themselves in harm's way every day to ensure people are getting the care they need when they need it – pharmacists are asking for continued respect, patience, understanding and cooperation during these very difficult and unprecedented times.

