

A portrait of a woman with blonde hair, smiling, wearing a blue lace top and a necklace. The background is a light blue gradient.

ONTARIO PHARMACY TECHNICIAN

FALL 2019

Relying on Excellence

*Darlene
Guindon*

*OPA's Pharmacy Technician
of the Year*



OPA Pharmacy Technicians Bundle

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Identifying Drug Interactions

Drug interactions can cause serious harm and they can be missed when prescribers and pharmacists are not aware of some drug use. Pharmacy technicians with their knowledge of products, interaction with patients buying OTCs, and their ability to take thorough medication histories, can help identify patients who are at risk of harm from drug interactions. This module covers scope of practice, the language and types of drug interactions, and offers suggestions on how pharmacy technicians can identify and refer patients in need of further assessment to pharmacists.

Essential Cannabis Knowledge for Pharmacy Technicians

This course will enable pharmacy technicians to understand current national and provincial regulations regarding cannabis, with a focus on Ontario regulations. Pharmacy technicians will also achieve an understanding of possible therapeutic uses and risks associated with the use of cannabis. We hope that a greater understanding of cannabis will lead to decreased stigma associated with its use and allow pharmacy technicians to communicate in a professional way when addressing questions and concerns regarding cannabis use.

Medical Devices Training for Pharmacy Technicians

Pharmacy technicians can instruct on how to operate a medical device without providing the interpretation of the results. Common devices that pharmacy technicians can educate patients on include various glucometers, insulin pens, blood pressure monitoring devices, inhalers, AeroChambers and EpiPen. This course will train pharmacy technicians how to educate patients on such medical devices with different case studies.

Upselling your Pharmacy Services (working title)

Due to the intense competitiveness of the pharmacy market, increasing store profit is a major priority. With the continual evolution of pharmacy practice, pharmacy technicians play a vital role in the dispensary, but more importantly, should play an even greater role taking leadership in initiating and discussing new services to patients. This course will teach participants how to play such an important role.

Billing 101: Ontario Drug Benefits and Third-Party Insurance

When entering prescriptions in a community pharmacy, pharmacists and pharmacy staff often encounter adjudication issues with ODB or third-party insurance. In the busy pharmacy setting, these issues are usually time sensitive and potentially lead to delays or interruptions of treatment. This program will provide an overview of various insurance plans that pharmacy professionals may encounter during their daily practice and present participants with strategies on how to manage common issues through the use of real world examples and how they are solved. At the end of the program, participants will feel confident in their knowledge of the adjudication system and will be able to resolve the most commonly encountered billing issues.



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OPA's Pharmacy Technician of the Year

It is said that if you want a job done well in Cornwall, Ont., ask Darlene Guindon.

As OPA's 2019 Pharmacy Technician of the Year, Darlene has earned a reputation in her community for going the extra mile.

"Darlene solves problems before we are even aware of them," says Lorena deRooy, pharmacist at Medical Arts Pharmacy in Cornwall.

Here is an example: A patient on a backordered antidepressant arrived at the counter for a winter's supply of her medications. She was leaving the country and there was no time to stabilize her on an alternative drug. Darlene singlehandedly sourced and organized 11 pick-ups in a 70 km radius to secure the required quantity without the patient ever knowing there was a problem.

"Darlene and her team of registered pharmacy technicians have allowed our pharmacist team to drastically improve our patient care. She is an ambassador to the registered pharmacy technician program and we are so grateful to have her on our team," says deRooy.

Relying Excel

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"I'm so pleased to have been recognized with this honour," says Guindon of her recent OPA Pharmacy Technician of the Year Award.

"It's enough for me to hear a patient say thank you. But, this award is like icing on the cake. It confirms that I'm doing right by my patients and my colleagues," says Guindon.

Of course, the road to her success hasn't always been easy. For Guindon, as the first hired registered pharmacy technician in Cornwall, she has spent many years building trust between the pharmacists she works with, other pharmacy technicians, her co-team and her patients.

"I've helped to build a workflow that enables the pharmacist to focus on therapeutics," says Guindon. "In doing this, I've become very engaged in patients' healthcare. Today's pharmacy has so many patients who may be elderly, chronically ill or face mental health challenges. Their healthcare needs can be complex. The pharmacy is a central place

where we can help them to have confidence in their ability to maintain control of their healthcare. Whether they need a referral, clinical assistance or just someone to listen, the pharmacy has the healthcare providers who can provide that support."

Guindon feels most rewarded when she is able to help those clients who have complex needs. For example, she describes the requirements that patients have when released from hospital. "I work with self-compliance and long-term care to ensure that the transition from one to another happens very smoothly and that there are no missed doses in therapy," says Guindon. "We often have discharges on IV medications and we can get the next dose due to the patient without any break in treatment. Or, we often have last minute admissions or orders into our hospice and we never leave without ensuring that all needs are met. To me this process is very worthwhile because it is the thoroughness of treatment that I would want any of my family members to receive and I am very happy to provide this to others."

What's next for Darlene? Darlene has taken responsibility for the pharmacy sterile compounding lab, following NAPRA Standards and working closely

with the College's Evaluator. Using gap analysis charts, Darlene ensures the pharmacy is current on all standards, requirements and guidelines so that they may continue to provide this level of patient care.

Guindon recently started working with a specialist from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada that offers a spasticity clinic for patients in Cornwall's long-term care homes. Working with the doctor's team and LTC nursing staff, she prepares Botox injections specific to each patient's needs.

Guindon is also the liaison for her pharmacy's work within the Community and Hospital Mental Health Teams and the Out Patient Mental Health Clinic.

When asked her advice to new pharmacy technicians, Guindon advises: "Own it! Before any pharmacist will delegate any duty to you, you have to show them that you are capable of doing that task. Regulation may state that it is within your scope but you have to be capable of completing it as requested by your pharmacist. You will have to earn their trust in your abilities. Remember that you are not only asking them to delegate to you but also to change the way they practice."

Before any pharmacist will delegate any duty to you, you have to show them that you are capable of doing that task.

Flu Shots

Frequently Asked Questions



References:

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Do I need to get the flu shot?^{1,2}

It is highly recommended to get your flu vaccine to reduce your chance of getting the flu and decrease the severity of infection if you do get it. Except in rare circumstances, everyone six months of age and older are strongly encouraged to get their flu shot, especially certain groups of people such as individuals who are at high risk for complications and those who may come into contact with them. Speak to your pharmacist for more information.

How effective is the flu vaccine?^{2,3}

The effectiveness of the flu vaccine can vary each season and is affected by factors such as the health and age of the recipient and how well the vaccine strains match the influenza viruses in circulation. The 2018/19 flu vaccine was estimated to be approximately 72% effective. Although the vaccine may not be an exact match each year, it is still important to receive the flu vaccine since some protection is still better than none.

When is the best time for me to get the flu shot?^{2,4}

You can get your flu vaccine anytime during the flu season between October and March, but it is recommended to get it as early as possible so that you are protected. Keep in mind that it may take up to two weeks after getting the flu shot for protection to begin.

Why do I have to get the flu shot every year?^{1,2}

An annual flu vaccine is recommended because the flu virus is constantly changing, and a new vaccine is created each year in order to better match the strains predicted to be in circulation. In addition, the protection from the vaccine usually does not last longer than one year.

Is the flu vaccine safe?^{2,5}

Yes. The flu vaccines currently available in Canada are generally well tolerated, with severe reactions to the vaccines being rare. Some people may experience local reactions, such as redness, tenderness, or swelling at the injection site, but these are usually mild and will subside in a few days.

Can the flu shot give you the flu?²

No. Flu vaccines either do not contain live viruses or only contain weakened versions of the viruses which cannot give you the flu.

Why is there thimerosal in the flu vaccine? Doesn't that cause autism?²

In Canada, the multi-dose vials of flu vaccine contain thimerosal, a preservative which is used to keep the vaccine free of contamination. However, the quantities contained are minute and have not been found to be associated with autism. Thimerosal is not included in the single-use or nasal spray formulations of the flu vaccine.

Where can I get the flu shot?

You can get the flu shot from multiple healthcare providers including your doctor, nurse and pharmacist. Pharmacists can administer flu vaccine to individuals five years of age and older. Many pharmacies are open late and on weekends making it convenient for you to obtain your flu shot. Visit your local pharmacy and speak to your pharmacist about getting your flu shot today!

Narcotics and controlled substances are ongoing targets for theft.

Most pharmacies have policies and procedures in place to help mitigate thefts. Pharmacy technicians should speak with their designated pharmacy manager or owner to learn about thefts in pharmacy. Your pharmacy will provide you with information about steps that can be taken to help prevent theft, what to do in the unfortunate case that a robbery does occur, how to cope after a robbery and how to help the pharmacy and its staff return to business as usual. Cut out this page and keep it for use in helping to convey information to the police should a robbery occur. For more tips on safety in the pharmacy, visit www.opatoday.com.



IN CASE OF ROBBERY

Notify police and fill in the blanks. Give one copy to the first police officer on the scene. Retain a photocopy for the pharmacy.

SEX	RACE	AGE	TIME OF EVENT
HAIR			HAT (COLOUR, TYPE)
EYES			TIE / NECKLACE / PIERCINGS / RINGS
GLASSES TYPE			COAT
TATTOOS			SHIRT
SCARS / MARKS			TROUSERS
COMPLEXION			SHOES
HEIGHT			WEIGHT

COMMON WEAPON TYPES

 LONG BARREL REVOLVER	 SNUB NOSE REVOLVER
 LARGE AUTOMATIC	 SMALL AUTOMATIC

WHAT ROBBER SAID



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Essential Cannabis Knowledge for Pharmacy Technicians

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Module 1: Laws and Regulations of Cannabis in Canada and in Ontario

Module 2: Ethics and Professionalism

Module 3: Therapeutics of Cannabis

PRICE:

Members: \$125

Non-members: \$250



Please note that this course is included in the PD Pharmacy Technicians Bundle (www.opatoday.com/224224). **For only \$50 more, you can have access to this and four other professional development courses!**