

Canada Needs a Strategy for Appropriate Medication Use

Medications can help us in many different ways. However, **when medications are not used appropriately, they put Canadians at risk of harm:**



Medication harms include **falls, fractures, memory problems, car crashes, premature loss of independence, and death** (Brubacher et al. 2021; Halli-Tierney et al. 2019).



Older adults, women, and people living in low-income neighbourhoods are at greatest risk of medication harm (CIHI 2018).



Nearly \$2B is spent yearly on potentially inappropriate medications and their consequences in older adults (2013 estimate - Morgan et al. 2016).

The Antidote: A 6-Step National Strategy for Appropriate Medication Use

Canada urgently needs a national strategy for appropriate medication use to reduce avoidable patient harm and health system costs. This strategy proposes a national organization to coordinate and support evidence-based interventions with and for jurisdictions. This would facilitate efficiency of resource use and increase the ability of jurisdictions to “do more with the same” in development of appropriateness strategies.



Flip for more information 

The Functions of a National Organization



Engagement

- Public (including vulnerable and marginalized populations), health provider, jurisdictional policymaker, and other stakeholder engagement embedded in the organizational structure from the outset.
- Inclusive of a needs assessment and identification of potential priorities for development.
- Ongoing planned routine engagement to ensure currency and relevance of the work.

Evidence-informed intervention creation

- Screening for national and international evidence to inform intervention development.
- Selection of initial priority areas and development of intervention programs to improve appropriate medication use, which may include non-pharmacologic therapies.
- Jurisdictions to select intervention(s) to implement and in which time frames; collaboration to adapt them to jurisdictional contexts.
- Ongoing development of additional intervention programs over time.

Review of evidence and adaptation

- Evidence reviewed for new programs and updating of existing programs on a continuous basis as new data emerges.
- Evidence review to include research, real-world learnings, process and outcome data.
- Successful interventions adapted to other jurisdictions and integrated in a sustainable manner.

Evaluation framework development; evaluation completion

- Evaluation framework identified as part of development of the intervention program that considers both processes and outcomes at patient, health system and jurisdictional levels.
- Collaborating and leveraging other established agencies, resources and links with experts and academics to conduct the evaluation.
- Evaluation of process and outcome results used for program improvement, which may include the range from minor modification for successful programs through to discontinuation for non-successful programs.

Economic evaluation

- Development of a framework for rigorous and comprehensive economic evaluations.
- Evaluation inclusive of system level costs including direct costs of interventions (pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic), health system savings/costs.
- Evaluation also to consider costs of unintended consequences, and patient-level costs.
- Completion of evaluation leveraging other established agencies and resources.
- Development of recommendations for sustainability based on the evaluation(s).

Research facilitation and integration

- Identify priority areas, link with researchers, and encourage research opportunities with other funders.
- Add to the literature through publication at different stages from description of interventions through implementation evaluation and outcomes.

For more information or to contact our team



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