

OHCA Position Statement

Reviewed and endorsed by the Ontario Pharmacists' Association.

The Community Pharmacist in Home Care

The Ontario Home Care Association (OHCA) advocates for the creation of a strong, reliable and accessible home care system which fully supports Ontarians who wish to remain independent and receive care at home. An effective health care system is only realized when all members of the team are appropriately integrated and utilized to deliver care. OHCA is committed to advocating for increasing consumer access to a 'virtual' team in the home - physicians, nurses, therapists, community pharmacists and needed medications, medical equipment and supplies. Consumer confidence in the entire home care system is greatly enhanced when care is provided by the *'right provider at the right time'*.

The OHCA values the contribution of the community pharmacist as an integral member of the health care team in the home. As Ontario's health care system evolves and shifts under the leadership of the LHINs, there is an opportunity to achieve enhanced client outcomes by acknowledging the valuable contribution of the community pharmacist in the home. With the increasing number of people receiving care at home there is a corresponding increase in the number and complexity of medications administered in that setting. As the medication experts, community pharmacists offer support to professionals working in the home and community and, to a greater extent, could provide enhanced direct care to clients at home.

Supporting the health team – The OHCA believes that the community pharmacist is an integral member of the health team. Home care staff, informal caregivers and clients themselves rely on the pharmacist to explain medication administration, storage, side effects and compatibility with other treatments. Having a pharmacist available 24/7 to support frontline clinicians is essential as the numbers and types of drugs available to treat illness continue to

escalate; and as more and more clients are cared for at home on medication protocols that were previously managed in the hospital setting only.

Providing direct care – OHCA believes that home care clients can be supported to an even greater degree when there is direct involvement with the community pharmacist for complex medication reviews, health teaching and contacts with both family and specialist physicians providing care. Direct pharmacist intervention in the home has the potential to enhance client outcomes and reduce adverse events such as unnecessary presentations to emergency departments and hospitalizations. The OHCA believes that the community pharmacist should function as a critical resource to formal and informal caregivers in the home and should be included as an additional support within the home in order to enhance client outcomes.

The OHCA, *the voice of home care in Ontario*, represents Canadian home care service organizations that deliver quality home care to Ontarians throughout the province. The OHCA advocates for a strong, dependable and accessible home care system for Ontarians. OHCA members are accredited through the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) or the International Standards Association (ISO).

For more information, contact:

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