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# COVID-19

Webinar Series

## *The Role of Team-Based Primary-Care Pharmacists During a Pandemic*

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# The Role of Team-Based Primary Care Pharmacists during COVID-19

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Underlined = link to resource

## Conflict of Interest

Nothing to declare related to this presentation

## Big Picture – Infection Control

- Social distancing
- Educate
  - Signs/symptoms of COVID-19
  - Self-assessment tools
  - Know where to find reliable information
- Maintain health
  - Self-assess/self-isolate if ill
  - Appropriate use of PPE and hand hygiene
  - Mental and physical health

## Pharmacist Role

Providing pharmaceutical care

## Providing Pharmaceutical Care

“Pharmaceutical Care is a practice in which the practitioner takes **responsibility** for a patient’s **drug-related needs**, and is held accountable for this commitment. In the course of this practice, responsible drug therapy is provided for the purpose of **achieving positive patient outcomes.**”

-Cipolle, Strand and Morley. Pharmaceutical Care Practice. 2012

## Assessing/Managing Drug Therapy

- Medication Experience
  - Appropriateness
  - Effectiveness
  - Safety
  - Adherence
- Identifying and resolving Drug Therapy Problems

# Ten Activities for Team-Based Primary Care Pharmacists during COVID-19



Something to keep in mind....

- Chronic Disease Management may not be the focus now
  - Many potential issues if unmanaged during the pandemic
- Incoming influx of mental health concerns
  - Inquire/screen/educate
- These activities will support care and reduce the burden on colleagues in community and acute care

## 1. Comprehensive Medication Assessment

- Continue this essential and unique service
  - Phone/video
  - Focus on the highest priority DTPs
  - More time for collaborative care
  - Med monitoring
    - Reduce ADR and hospitalizations
- Ensure quality BPMH
  - Document
  - Share as necessary
    - pharmacy, acute care system, primary care home, etc

## 2. Set Medication Related Goals

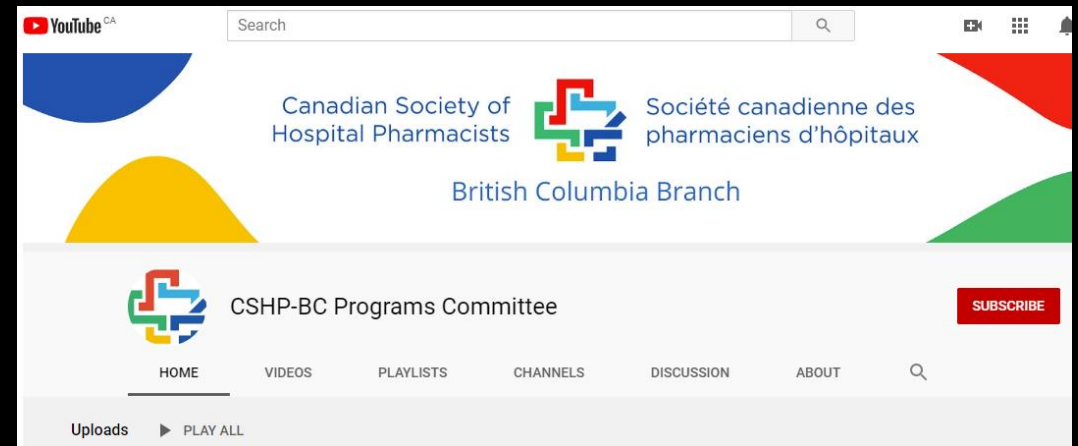
- **Must be clearly articulated in the Care Plan**
  - Discuss with patient if not previously done
  - Educate on the chosen goals
  - Reassess based on patient and other factors
  - Document and share as necessary

### 3. COVID-19 management

- Know management of mild-moderate COVID-19
  - Isolation
  - Symptomatic treatment
    - Hydration
    - Nourishment
    - Fever management
    - OTC cough/sore throat remedies
  - Educate on signs/symptoms of worsening disease
    - Difficulty breathing, chest pain/pressure, confusion, drowsiness, weakness
    - When to seek follow-up care

## 4. Managing COVID-19 related drug questions

- Safety of ibuprofen
- Efficacy of hydroxychloroquine
- Continue ACE/ARB?
- Use of corticosteroids during infection
- Statins
- State of vaccines
- Supplement/non-evidence based treatment myths



## 5. Reducing Risk of Respiratory Complications

- Smoking cessation
  - “smoking is most likely associated with the negative progression and adverse outcomes of COVID-19.”
- COPD Action Plans
  - Ensure people have them and can use them, minimizing chance of hospitalization
- Asthma and COPD management:
  - Adherence to medications is key!

## 6. Medication access for the vulnerable

## 6. Medication access for the vulnerable

- Support for substance and EtOH users
  - Less access to drugs/EtOH
  - Support safe prescribing for OAT, and medications for EtOH dependence
  - Buprenorphine extended release (Sublocade®) injection
- Naloxone use during COVID-19
  - PPE first
- Medical Abortion access
  - Via telemedicine



## 7. Consider Deprescribing

- **Is this a timely opportunity?**
  - Lifestyle changes during COVID-19
  - Reconsideration of medication related goals/preferences
    - What really matters?
  - Actual or potential ADRs?
  - Cost effectiveness of drug therapy

## 8. Reducing non-essential visits

- “Goldilocks” approach to medicine
  - Lab tests
    - A1c really necessary every 3 months?
    - INR interval reasonable?
  - Less strict adherence to guideline targets
- Change B12 injectable to oral
- Avoiding non-essential meds that may result in lab testing
  - Terbinafine for onychomycosis can wait
  - Focus more on clinical markers of success
    - Allopurinol SUA testing
    - Cholesterol monitoring
    - Thyroid monitoring

## 9. Anticipating Drug Shortages

- Foresee and prevent issues
  - Consider this another opportunity for rational prescribing/deprescribing
  - Guidance for managing drug shortages arising during COVID-19 Pandemic
    - Fluticasone inhaler
    - Salbutamol inhaler
    - Amoxicillin oral suspension
    - Dipyridamole/ASA oral capsule
  - Other tier 3 meds of importance

## 10. Review Immunization Process

- Foundations of Immunization
  - General considerations
  - Consent process
  - Communicating about Vaccines/Vaccine Hesitancy
    - Only 60% believe a vaccine should be mandatory
    - Only 73% would get the vaccine if available

## 11. Others

- Be aware of ongoing clinical trials
- Clinic based quality improvement projects
  - Now have the time to design and implement
  - Discuss with team what might be the most important
- Support for pharmacy students/interns
  - Universities will be looking at alternatives for placements for students.
    - Project that need to be completed?
    - Can aspects of a rotation be done remotely/from a distance?
- Be aware of scams:
  - Offer reassuring information
  - Have people call you back at clinic number if possible

Questions?