



# Guide to Planning Pharmacy Awareness Month

## Preparing for Pharmacy Awareness

The landscape of pharmacy practice is changing at a rapid and exciting pace. As clinical care responsibilities of pharmacists continue to evolve and opportunities for hospital pharmacists to use their skills, knowledge, and expertise grows, it is more crucial to raise awareness about the profession and show other healthcare professions and patients the multitude of services that pharmacists offer.

***Pharmacy Awareness Month (PAM)***, held in March of each year, is a time to recognize the multiple roles of the pharmacist. Most importantly, it is a time to educate other health care professionals and patients about pharmacists' expanding roles.

Since 1998, pharmacies held Pharmacy Awareness Week in the first week of March. Starting in 2013 the period was extended to one month.

Hospital pharmacies might find it challenging to extend their pharmacy awareness activities over a month. Alternatively, the switch to a month-long period creates opportunities for the department to select a time period within March that is best suited for the department and hospital to promote pharmacy awareness. Two weeks might work for one department while one week is fine for another; the choice is yours!

This guide is designed to generate ideas and assist you in executing a successful PAM program in your health care setting. The activities suggested here can be modified to suit the structure of your institution and may vary depending on whether the target audience includes patients, other health care professionals, or both.



Save the dates!

## How to Plan for Pharmacy Awareness Month

Start planning as early as January to get the most out of your PAM campaign while enjoying the process.

Here is a checklist of items to help you stay organized and on track when planning your PAM campaign:

### Early-to-Mid- January

- Recruit staff to form a planning committee that will be responsible for coordinating activities. Encourage the committee to use this guide in its planning.
- Set out goals and objectives for your PAM campaign. Stay focused and be specific.
- Find out if there are other PAM events being planned at local or provincial levels that you can coordinate your institutions' activities with
- Determine if there is a theme or an area of specialty that you would like to focus your campaign around
- Draft a list of events and activities that you would like to hold
- Determine the steps that will be needed to host the event and break each step into tasks to be assigned and accomplished within reasonable timeframe
- Check out resources (e.g., posters, handouts) you would like to use during PAM
- Determine funding and all resources available to you and make a budget
- Seek support and get approval from your department/hospital to organize the events for the week

### Late January

- Reserve any necessary equipment or locations that will be needed
- Order your educational and promotional materials early and create any other necessary printed material
- If you would like to run sessions on specific topics such as high blood pressure, diabetes, etc., contact other organizations to see if additional resources and materials may be offered
- Create the program and itinerary for PAM
- Contact guest speakers, as wanted
- Contact media outlets, as wanted
- Send out invitations 3-4 weeks in advance of your PAM event

### February

- Prepare or buy all necessary presentations and materials, including any prizes for participants
- Finalize locations and speakers
- Advertise PAM within your institution through email memos, newsletters, posters on common area notice boards, announcements on the public address system, etc.
- Speak with local administrators and inform the inter-professional healthcare team about PAM activities
- Finalize and distribute the itinerary for PAM
- Write and issue a press release to media within your community
- Assign committee members, staff, and volunteers for the various events
- Share your plans with CSHP for expanded promotion

### March

- Hold PAM events

### After PAM

- Hold a meeting with the committee to debrief and evaluate how PAM went
  - Discuss what worked, what could be different next year and seek feedback from participants
- Finalize the billing and financials
- Thank the speakers, coordinators, volunteers, and participants
- Create an article about the event, including event photos, prize winners, acknowledgements etc., and post it on your hospital or department's website, in a newsletter, or share it with CSHP



# What to Plan for Pharmacy Awareness Month

The following suggestions describe activities that you may want to consider for your PAM. Some of these activities may be more feasible than others, depending on your institution.

- Decide on a **theme or slogan** that accurately reflects your ideas for PAM. Choose something that your target audience will easily remember.
- **Organize tours** of the pharmacy department for other hospital staff, showcasing daily pharmacy operations and the process that occurs from when an order is written to when the medication is dispensed
- Decorate common areas of the hospital with PAM posters
- Set up a mock pharmacy or display counter in a common area of the hospital
  - Use attractive and fun displays
  - Provide hospital pharmacist brochures, questionnaires highlighting fun facts about your pharmacy department, crossword puzzles, word searches, PAM pens, etc.
- Have the CSHP video promoting the role of hospital pharmacists playing in a continuous loop

Conduct **lunch-hour or coffee break presentations** during the week on topics that highlight

the pharmacist's role, such as medication reconciliation, drug information, risk management, interdisciplinary collaboration, and chronic disease management. Highlight the differences in roles between pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

- Place an article in your hospital newsletter that promotes PAM, describes services provided by your hospital's pharmacists, answers frequently asked questions about your department, or focuses on a specific topic or specialty area.
- Hold a competition or host a game-show where participants answer pharmacy-related questions and have the chance to win prizes
- Link with community pharmacists and offer to speak at your local community pharmacist association about the need for better communication between practitioners in the two practice settings
- Run a "medication check-up" or brown bag workshop for hospital employees, patients, and visitors
- Use **social media** to get the word out about PAM.

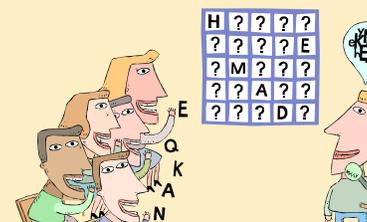
 @CSHP\_SCPH



## CSHP and PAM

Each fall, a group of CSHP members form a working group for the upcoming Pharmacy Awareness Month. This group develops the theme for the upcoming PAM, as well as other materials or tools (e.g., social media calendar) to support spreading the word about PAM.

CSHP members who are interested in joining the working group should contact [Anne Stacey](mailto:astacey@cshp.ca), Ontario Branch and Advocacy Executive Assistant ([astacey@cshp.ca](mailto:astacey@cshp.ca)) to join the group.



# Resources

## Looking for a theme?

- Check out [CSHP's website](#) to learn more about the theme for the upcoming PAM

## Looking for more information?

- Use the [advocacy toolkits](#) to learn more about promotion of events and/or public relations.
- Check out CSHP's [Advocacy](#) webpage for information on recent advocacy campaigns

## Need promotional materials?

- Visit CSHP's [PAM webpage](#)
  - 2-minute video about the value of hospital pharmacists
  - 3 new posters
  - brochure for patients
  - other materials provided by CSHP branches
  - The posters and brochures are downloadable so you can arrange for printing yourself, or you can purchase them from CSHP.

## Ordering information for CSHP's PAM Kit

CSHP has materials for PAM which you can distribute and use in your institution.

Fill out an order form found on the Products and Publications section of CSHP's website and place your order:

**By Mail**  
Publications Administrator  
CSHP  
30 Concourse Gate, Unit 3  
Ottawa, Ontario K2E 7V7

**By Fax**  
613-736-5660



## About CSHP

The Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) is the national voluntary organization of pharmacists committed to patient care through the advancement of safe, effective medication use in hospitals and other collaborative healthcare settings.

CSHP supports its members through advocacy, education, information sharing, promotion of best practices, and facilitation of research and recognition of excellence.

## CSHP's Vision 2020

CSHP will be a thriving, progressive society, leading and inspiring excellent pharmacy practice integral to patient-centered care in hospitals and other collaborative healthcare settings.