



2022 ONTARIO ELECTION

Pharmacy Professionals Policy Platform

Every day, in all communities across Ontario, pharmacy professionals are building strong, lasting relationships with Ontarians. Whether it's a question about a medication, recommending a treatment or getting a vaccine, we are here for you.

When COVID-19 hit, we rolled up our sleeves and rose to the challenge by keeping our doors open to provide crucial frontline care throughout the pandemic. And we delivered – to date we've administered more than:



7.5+ million
vaccine doses



800,000+
COVID-19 PCR tests

The OPA advocates on behalf of more than 25,000 pharmacy professionals in Ontario and are pleased to provide our policy priorities in advance of the 2022 Ontario election. We are calling on all parties to commit to partnering with Ontario's pharmacy professionals to help improve access to care to keep Ontarians safe and healthy.

We're proud of the work we've done. And we're ready for what's next.

Here is how government can work with us to support Ontarians:

1 **ENABLE BETTER ACCESS TO CARE.**

Expand pharmacists' scope of practice to enable pharmacists to assess and, if necessary, prescribe medications for minor ailments, such as urinary tract infections, eczema, and conjunctivitis, within a publicly funded minor ailments program.

Eight out of 10 provinces are already realizing the benefits of pharmacists serving as a patient's first point-of-entry into the health system for the assessment and treatment of minor ailments. It's time for Ontario to catch up.

2 **INCREASE IMMUNIZATION RATES.**

Enable pharmacy professionals to administer publicly funded vaccinations, like those for HPV, pneumonia and other routine childhood vaccines. The COVID-19 pandemic has placed an immense strain on the healthcare system which has resulted in unintended consequences, such as the delay of routine immunizations.

As accessible and trusted healthcare providers, pharmacy professionals can play a key role in ensuring patients who require catch-up vaccines due to missed or delayed doses have convenient and equitable access.

3 **SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY CARE.**

Investment in pharmacy programs and services is an investment in optimized care for patients and a more sustainable and efficient health care system. A study examining costs and savings associated with pharmacists prescribing for minor ailments found that after five years of implementation there was a return on investment of \$2.53 for every \$1 spent.

To support the economic sustainability of the sector, dispensing and compounding fees should also be aligned with cost-of-living increases. There has been good progress made in this field and the OPA encourages the government to continue this work to support our frontline pharmacists.

4 **CENTRE CARE AROUND THE PATIENT.**

Across Ontario, pharmacy professionals are continually proving that they do more than just dispense medications. Pharmacy professionals are stepping up to support and meet patients in their homes, in the community, in long-term care and in hospitals to provide them the care they need to lead healthy and full lives. We need to continue to evolve our healthcare system so that it is centered around patients, not providers. Pharmacy professionals can help to deliver on this goal, but we need to enable them to work to their full potential across the healthcare system.

An investment in pharmacy is a signal to the people of Ontario that their health matters, and that they deserve better access to high-quality care. Pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers with the training and expertise to create additional capacity in the healthcare system. By enabling pharmacists to provide care to more patients in the community within a cost-effective model, we deliver a significant government return on investment while improving health outcomes for all Ontarians.