

alberta college of
pharmacists



acpnews

In this issue...

- 2** • Important reminder about regulations
 - Conference / Paddy Meade, DM
- 3** • Awards videos on web
 - College e-mail
- 4** • Professional malpractice insurance
 - Be part of college decision making
- 5** • Want electronic notification of **acp news**?
 - Burglary tips
 - 2007 Conference
- 6** • New Executive Committee
 - District 1 election
 - New CEU requirements
 - Learning Portfolio tip
- 7** • Health Canada advisories
 - Promethazine HCl
- 8** • Pork insulins
 - Suspension of physician
 - Provincial continuing care standards
- 9** • Transferring prescriptions
- 10** • Lab tests through Netcare
 - TPPs from Saskatchewan
- 11** • NAPRA News
 - Grad breakfast
 - Pharmacists and meth
- 12** • From the faculty
 - Memorials

Welcome to **Jeff Whissell,** **2006/07 president!**



Jeff Whissell was installed as the college's new president at the annual general meeting on Sat., June 3 in Edmonton.

In his inaugural address Jeff expressed the sentiment prevalent among most of the conference delegates when he said he is enthusiastic about the road ahead for pharmacy. He noted that, given the approval of the *Pharmacists Profession Regulation*, pharmacists are better positioned to affect positively the drug therapy needs of Albertans. An important aspect of our new scope of practice, he emphasized, is working closely with the patient and other members of the health care team to ensure safe and effective therapies.

Jeff expressed appreciation for the involvement of individual pharmacists as the new regulations were being developed. Direct input from pharmacists has made the principles behind the regulations better, he said.

Jeff represents District 3 at Council. He is a hospital pharmacist with eight years of clinical pharmacy experience, and is responsible for the business and professional affairs of Capital Health's regional pharmacy services.

A pharmacy graduate from the UofA,

he is serving his fourth year on the college's governing body.

Congratulations Jeff! We look forward to working with you during this exciting phase of pharmacist practice. ■

HPA regulation approved—one of many big steps

Cabinet's May 30, 2006 approval of the *Pharmacists Profession Regulation* to the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) marks the beginning of a new regulatory framework for practice.

The regulation gives Alberta pharmacists the most comprehensive scope of practice in Canada. It is based on pharmacists working as part of a health care team; effective and cooperative relationships with patients and other health professionals are critical to the framework's success.

The approved regulation does not address inducements. The government has expressed interest in further discussion on this topic, in particular how inducements affect patient behaviour and pharmacist practice. We will follow up on their invitation.

We hope that the regulation to the *Pharmacy and Drug Act* (PDA) will be considered during the summer. Once both regulations (HPA and PDA) are approved by Cabinet, they will be jointly proclaimed. We anticipate implementation will occur later this year.

Now that the regulation to the HPA has been passed, the college is able

continued on page 2

acpnews

is published six times per year
by the Alberta College of Pharmacists.
Submissions for publication should be sent to:

Editor
acpnews

1200 - 10303 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton AB T5J 3N6

The deadline for submissions is the end of
the first week of the month prior to publication.
Information about content and length of
articles can be obtained from the editor.

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Councillors and our public members can be
reached by e-mail via our website at
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Staff Directory

All staff are available at (780) 990-0321
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Their e-mail addresses are available on our
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alberta college of
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**HPA regulation** *continued from page 1*

to complete the development of draft
standards of practice and standards
of pharmacy operations and begin
the consultation process required for
each of these documents.

As the new regulatory framework rolls
out, every pharmacist on the clinical
register will be required to participate
in an orientation program about the
new regulations **prior to
undertaking new activities
such as prescribing or
administering drugs by
injection**. Watch for details about
orientation sessions later this fall.

Also, the college must further define
the council requirements for
pharmacists who will be involved in
initiating new drug therapy. Council
has approved the creation of an
expert committee comprised of
pharmacists, a nurse practitioner, a
physician and a public member to
make recommendations about those
requirements.

The approval of the HPA regulation
would not have been taken without
the support of Alberta pharmacists.
We are also grateful for the support of

Health Minister Iris Evans and her
staff, both in her office and at Alberta
Health and Wellness, also the support
of other health professionals. We
thank each one for their involvement
in this achievement.

The Alberta Health and Wellness
announcement about this
development can be found on the
department's website at
www.health.gov.ab.ca/

ACP's news release can be found at
<http://pharmacists.ab.ca/college/resource.aspx?id=5669>. ■

College conference a success! Deputy minister offers words of wisdom

The atmosphere was definitely upbeat
and celebratory at the college's
conference and annual general
meeting (AGM), reflecting the
excitement generated by the new
Pharmacists Profession Regulation.

Paddy Meade, deputy minister of
Alberta Health and Wellness, was the

Important reminder about the regulations

The college reminds all pharmacists
that, despite the excitement of having
our regulation to the *Health Professions
Act* passed, including an expanded
scope of practice, **pharmacists are
not authorized to prescribe at
this time**.

The next critical step in this process is
completing discussions with Alberta
Health and Wellness about the
regulation to the *Pharmacy and Drug
Act* and pursuing Cabinet's
consideration and acceptance of the
regulation.

Both regulations must be proclaimed at
the same time since the *Health
Professions Act* addresses pharmacist

practice and the *Pharmacy and Drug
Act* addresses the licensing and
operation of pharmacies and drug
scheduling. Implementation will take
place some time after the regulations
are proclaimed.

Look for more information in **heads up!**
included with this newsletter.

We have prepared a fact sheet that
gives an overview of the next steps and
some information you can use when
talking with patients and other health
care professionals.

You'll find the fact sheet on our website
at <http://pharmacists.ab.ca/college/resource.aspx?id=5677>.

Pharmacists are not authorized to prescribe at this time.

keynote speaker at the AGM luncheon. She congratulated the profession on the new regulation and thanked everyone for their contributions. She noted that the change was not without controversy, but added that the Alberta government believes allowing health professionals to practise to their full scope of practice is an essential part of health reform.

She also remarked that the government is confident in the college's abilities and judgement to set and enforce appropriate standards to ensure that pharmacists may prescribe safely.

Ms. Meade indicated that the government as a whole is concerned about sustainability of the health system, an issue that's challenging every jurisdiction across the country. A recent government report indicates that, regardless of how we choose to fund the health system, costs are rising at unsustainable rates and will be more difficult to control as time progresses.

In February 2006 as a means of addressing the sustainability challenge, Alberta Health and Wellness' announced the Health Policy Framework as a first step. The framework is designed to guide health leaders, and promote broader thinking and creativity as they search for better ways to organize, deliver and pay for health services.

Ms. Meade referred to the need for health professionals to work in teams, allowing physicians to spend more

time on complex cases and allowing pharmacists, nurse practitioners and other professionals to assume a greater role in patient care. She noted that pharmacists are often the first point of contact in the health care team, and are trained in health promotion, disease prevention, screening, treatment and management of disease, self-care and patient education. She said pharmacists are a critical part of Alberta's health care system.

She encouraged pharmacists to be part of the electronic health record and thanked those pharmacists who are already part of the system. ■

See award-winning pharmacists on the web

You can view video clips of our ACP award winners on the college website. The clips are about two and a half minutes each, and include interviews with the award winners about some of their accomplishments.

You can find the videos on our website in the members only section at

https://pharmacists.ab.ca/news_events/default.aspx?id=5680

The files themselves are very large so they will only be on the website until July 31, 2006.

The videos were developed for the Awards Breakfast at the college's conference and annual general meeting and were also shown during the annual ACP grad breakfast. ■



Are you using your college e-mail?

Are you one of the **69.9 per cent** of pharmacists who are using the college e-mail system? If not, you'll soon be left out of receiving important information in a timely way.

Soon the college will consider sending information to registrants using only electronic means. You could lose out of safety or other information important to your practice if you aren't part of the e-mail system.

If you haven't signed on, please do so soon. If you prefer not to have more than one mailbox to review each day, you can forward the college e-mail to another e-mail address.

Every Alberta pharmacist has been given a username and password for the system. If you've forgotten yours, please contact Misti at the college office. You can reach her by calling (780) 990-0321 or 1-877-227-3838, or by sending her an e-mail at Misti.Denton@pharmacists.ab.ca.

Like the new layout?

We've freshened up the look of **acp news**—some of the changes are subtle, some not so subtle.

Let us know what you think.

Send your comments to lynn.otteson@pharmacists.ab.ca.

Thanks!

acpnews

Want a challenge and an opportunity to learn? Be part of college decision making

ACP seeks pharmacists interested in serving on a standing committee, working group or task force during the 2006/07 registration year. Positions are open on the Competence Committee and on working groups yet to be established.

The Competence Committee advises on matters related to the development and maintenance of the continuing competence program. Appointment to this committee is for a three-year term, with eligibility for a second term.

For more information about the committee, go to the college's website at pharmacists.ab.ca and click on *About*.

Throughout the year the college may appoint working groups and task forces to address short-term projects. The number and type of these bodies vary from year to year. Additionally, the college often makes appointments to external committees and working groups established by Alberta Health and Wellness, regional health authorities or other partnering organizations.

If you are interested in participating in any of these opportunities, please forward your personal biography to Lynn Szoo at Lynn.Szoo@pharmacists.ab.ca or by fax at (780) 990-0328.

If the Competence Committee is of particular interest to you, please have your biography at the college office by **Aug. 15, 2006. I**

Professional malpractice insurance—evidence to be required

Council has reviewed its policy on malpractice insurance required by pharmacists registering on the clinical register upon proclamation of the *Health Professions Act*.

After considering both legal and broker advice, Council has reaffirmed that a requirement for registration on the clinical register is evidence of holding a personal malpractice insurance policy for the amount of at least two million dollars, in a claims-made format.

This decision means that the policy must be issued in your name, and must be transportable and provide coverage regardless of where you practise pharmacy in Alberta.

The requirement is designed to protect the public and to ensure that there is a specified level of coverage behind each pharmacist that will become available to provide compensation where a negligent act or omission by a pharmacist harms a patient.

Council has reaffirmed the requirement for **personal coverage** because:

- employer policies are usually in the name of the employer and, depending on claims against any or all individuals addressed under the employer's plan, aggregate limits may not provide adequate coverage for individuals; and,
- most employer plans are not transportable for the employee, i.e., they do not apply regardless of where the employees works. Given that the registration process authorizes practise any place in Alberta, the registration requirement must similarly provide protection for practise any place in Alberta, regardless of employer.

While professional malpractice insurance was not a requirement for registration renewal at July 1, 2006 (although the college has strongly recommended it), it will be a requirement for registration upon proclamation of the *Health*

What to include in your biography

Information to be included in your biography should include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- name,
- registration number,
- practice history and experience,
- unique learning/training opportunities in the past five years,
- designations,
- awards, and
- leadership roles you have held within the profession or your community.



Burglary TIPS

Ever wondered how to make your pharmacy less appealing to potential thefts? Ever wondered what you have to do if your pharmacy is robbed?

Check out the **Burglary tips** insert in this newsletter and file it in a handy place for your reference.

Professions Act. **Both the college and the minister have assured Albertans that, prior to pharmacists being authorized to prescribe Schedule 1 drugs, appropriate insurance coverage will be in place.**

You will receive correspondence from ACP requesting that you submit evidence that you have the necessary insurance coverage prescribed by Council. Details of what constitutes evidence will be included in the correspondence.

We are pursuing proclamation of the *Health Professions Act* in the early fall; therefore, the college must receive the evidence by that time.

Watch for further details on this important issue. ■

Want electronic notification of acp news?

You can choose to receive your college newsletter through an e-mailed link to the version on our website.

Simply make your selection in *My Registration Profile*. Choose *Profile Management*, then *Change Other Information*.

Be sure to click on Submit so the system will register your choice.

At this point, the version on the site is a pdf of the printed copy. If sufficient numbers of pharmacists request the electronic version, we will consider a specifically designed electronic newsletter.

In the meantime, if you want to reduce the amount of paper you receive and want to receive the newsletter more quickly than waiting for Canada Post, choose to receive the electronic notification of the newsletter.

We can honour your electronic request with the next published issue. ■



Don't forget!

Mark your calendars for the ground-breaking three-professions conference next year when pharmacists, nurses and physicians meet at the Banff Springs Hotel to learn together.

May 3 to 6, 2007
Be there!



Thank you Karen!

Karen Wolfe has resigned her position as councillor for District 1. She is moving to Ottawa to join the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities as director of Pharmacy Practice Support.

Karen has served on Council for three years, including a term as president in 2005/06.

Thank you Karen for your contributions to the profession! We wish you well in your new position.

New Executive Committee

At its June 2, 2006 meeting, Council appointed a new Executive Committee for the 2006/07 registration year. The committee members are:

- President: Jeff Whissell
- President Elect: Dianne Donnan
- Vice President: Jim Krempien

X Election in District 1

Council has called for a bi-election in District 1 to replace Karen Wolfe who resigned her position.

If you are in District 1, watch for your nomination package which was mailed on June 21, 2006.

Nominations must be returned to the college office **by July 21, 2006.**



So much to learn, so little time!

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PLAN

A new era in continuing professional development!

On April 26, 2006, Council made an important decision based on the recommendation of the Competence Committee.

Effective July 1, 2006 and beginning with the 2006-2007 membership year,

you may accrue all of your CEUs from non-accredited learning activities if you wish.

The requirement for at least eight accredited CEUs per year has been rescinded.

Highlights of the decision are:

- you must still accrue at least 15 continuing education units (CEUs) of professional development per registration year;

- you may obtain these CEUs from accredited or non-accredited learning activities as long as it is relevant to your practice;
- you must document all non-accredited learning activities that you claim for registration renewal on the Non-accredited Learning Record; and
- there is no minimum requirement for accredited CEUs.

This decision is in keeping with the philosophy of the RxCEL Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program implemented in September 2005. The philosophy is that pharmacists assess their competency in their current practice, identify areas that they need or want to work on, develop a learning plan, undertake learning activities to meet their needs, and evaluate their own learning.

Learning portfolio tip...

"I don't claim my non-accredited learning because it seems like too much work to fill out the form and because I'm afraid the college will disallow the learning activity."

If this is how you feel about non-accredited learning let's dispel these myths.

The form used to document non-accredited learning has been simplified and shortened. It is now just one page. It is even available on the ACP website as a computer-editable form. (Go to the RxCEL *Learning Portfolio* under *Continuing Competence* on our website at pharmacists.ab.ca.)

The criteria for non-accredited learning are as follows.

The activity must be **enhanced** learning. Passing on your knowledge to students you are precepting or to a senior's group is not enhancing your

learning and therefore cannot be claimed.

The learning must be relevant to your pharmacy practice. Taking lessons in Italian for your upcoming vacation does not qualify. Learning to speak Vietnamese because a large portion of your patients are Vietnamese could qualify as non-accredited learning.

You must document your non-accredited learning on the Non-accredited Learning Record as you participate in the activity and/or immediately after completing it. Creating a Non-accredited Learning Record long after the fact is not acceptable; don't wait until you're selected for an audit of your learning portfolio.



ACP and other organizations such as CCCEP will continue to accredit programs at the request of providers. Accreditation can help you evaluate the quality of a program. However, the college's new policy allows more flexibility. It recognizes that accredited programs may not meet the learning needs of all pharmacists, or that there may not be accredited programs available to meet a pharmacist's identified learning needs. The process of completing a non-accredited learning record allows a pharmacist to conduct their own evaluation of a learning activity, rather than accreditation by a third party.

To learn more about how to develop your own continuing professional development plan watch for workshops offered by the Office of Continuing Pharmacy Education, Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, UofA. There is also a print course available from their office. ■

Safety information: promethazine hydrochloride

The US Food and Drug Administration has issued a safety alert that warns parents and health care professionals they should not give drugs containing promethazine hydrochloride to children younger than two. The use of the products has the potential for fatal respiratory depression.

The warning includes all medications containing the drug, including syrups, suppositories, injectables and tablets.

Caution should also be used when administering promethazine HCl medications to pediatric patients two years of age and older.

The complete FDA advisory for health professionals can be found on the FDA website at www.fda.gov/cder/drug/InfoSheets/HCP/promethazineHCP.pdf

Health Canada had not issued an alert at the time we went to press. ■

Health Canada advisories

After the last edition of the newsletter went to print, Health Canada placed the following advisories on its website. You can obtain a copy by using the following links or by calling Misti Denton at the college office at (780) 990-0321 or 1-877-227-3838, or by contacting her by e-mail at Misti.Denton@pharmacists.ab.ca.

- **products containing anabolic steroids**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_17_e.html
- **Salus-haus liquid vitamin products**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_19_e.html
- **mineral oil products**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_20_e.html
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_36_e.html
- **Eucalyptus Oil BP bottles**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_21_e.html
- **LifeTime Complexed Potassium tablets**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_21_e.html
- **Miracle Bion product**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_23_e.html
- **Nasutra**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_25_e.html
- **Sandoz Prednisolone 1% ophthalmic suspension**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_24_e.html

- **Minitran transdermal system 0.6 mg/hr (nitroglycerin)**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_27_e.html
- **Accu-Chek™ Ultraflex Infusion sets**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/advisories-avis/public/2006/index_e.html
- **L-arginine**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_30_e.html
- **Tequin (gatifloxacin)**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/advisories-avis/prof/2006/index_e.html
- **weight loss products containing ephedrine and caffeine**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_33_e.html
- **Evista® (raloxifene hydrochloride)**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/advisories-avis/prof/2006/index_e.html
- **ADHD drugs**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_35_e.html
- **Ocean Plasma Isotonic Living Water and Ocean Plasma Hypertonic Living Water**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_38_e.html
- **Triaminic Vapour Patch**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2006/2006_39_e.html
- **Iressa® (gefitinib) 250 mg tablets**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/advisories-avis/public/2006/index_e.html

acp xPresses and News

Here is a list of faxes and e-mails distributed to registrants and pharmacies since the last issue of the newsletter.

acp xPress

There were no faxes distributed since the last newsletter.

acp news

External

April 19 ■ CARN available

May 5 & 19 ■ ECP survey

Operations

April & May ■ ACP conference information

April 19 ■ Council election results

April 21 & May 24 ■ Council meeting

May 3 ■ Annual report and AGM notice

June 9 ■ Awards video on web

Practice issues

April 19, May 11 ■ Forgery alert

May 16 ■ AccuChek infusion sets

May 23 ■ Notice of physician suspension

May 26 and 29 ■ Stolen TPP pad

May 31 ■ HPA regulation approved

June 7 ■ Information on new regulation

June 9 ■ Stolen TPP

Drug information

April 21 ■ Anabolic steroids

April 24 ■ Salus-haus liquid vitamins

April 26 ■ Promethazine hydrochloride

May 1 & 26 ■ Mineral oil

May 1 ■ Eucalyptus oil

■ LifeTime complexed potassium

■ Miracle Bion

May 4 ■ Nasutra

■ Sandoz prednisolone 1%

May 8 ■ Pork insulins

May 12 ■ Minitran transdermal patch

May 16 ■ L-arginine

May 17 ■ Tequin (gatifloxacin)

May 24 ■ Ephedrine and caffeine

May 25 ■ Evista (raloxifene hydrochloride)

May 26 ■ ADHD drugs

May 30 ■ Living Water

■ Triaminic vapour patch

June 5 ■ Iressa (gefitinib)

Availability of pork insulins

Health Canada has asked the college to inform pharmacists that the department has recently authorized for sale in Canada two new pork insulins, Hypurin Regular and Hypurin NPH.

Health Canada is concerned that some pharmacists have advised their patients that pork insulins are not available in the Canadian market. Given that there are a small number of patients with diabetes who cannot manage their disease with biosynthetic insulins, it is important to know that pork insulins are available.

For more information on the Hypurin Regular and Hypurin NPH products from the Health Canada Drug Product Database at www.hc-sc.gc.ca/drug2/company/c12151.html. ■

April 2006 issue of Adverse Reaction Newsletter

The April 2006 *Canadian Adverse Reaction Newsletter* (CARN) is now available from the *Safety Advisories* section of our website.

In this issue:

- tenofovir and NSAIDs: acute renal failure
- adverse reaction reporting 2005
- isotretinoin: myocardial infarction, cerebrovascular and thromboembolic disorders
- regional adverse reaction centres: relocation
- case presentation: overnight orthokeratology and *Acanthamoeba* keratitis
- as well as a summary of advisories.

You can subscribe to receive the CARN electronically from the Health Canada website at www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/me_deff/subscribe-abonnement/index_e.html

Our office receives a limited supply of the printed copy. Please contact us if you want to receive the April 2006 issue in the mail. ■

Notice of interim suspension of physician

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta has notified us that the following physician was suspended from practice at noon on May 23, 2006.

The physician is:

Dr. William (Bill) Cottier
205 – 73 – 7 Street SE
Medicine Hat, AB T1A 1J2
(403) 528-9776

Pharmacists should use their professional judgement about filling outstanding prescription refills. Generally, refills should be processed only once (over a short period) to accommodate patients until they can see another physician. ■

Provincial continuing care standards

Alberta Health and Wellness has released the new continuing care standards. The standards outline the expectations for regional health authorities that provide services in continuing care facilities. They include health service standards and accommodation standards for supportive living facilities and long-term care facilities.

While there are no standards specific to pharmacists, the health service standards include a section on medication management that might be of interest to pharmacists who provide services to continuing care facilities. These standards are available on the department's website at www.health.gov.ab.ca/key/Standards_ContinuingCare.pdf. ■



You asked us...

Q Do I have to transfer a prescription copy to a competitor if a patient asks to fill her prescription there?

My patient is moving to a new city and does not have a new pharmacy yet. When I provide a prescription copy, does it have to be a verbal transfer of information between pharmacists or can I write out the prescription and give it to the patient to take with her?

If a patient brings me a multiple-order discharge prescription and only wants one medication filled at my pharmacy, how do I deal with the unfilled prescriptions?

A For a variety of reasons, patients will occasionally ask to transfer their prescription to or from another pharmacy. Because the prescription belongs to the patient, not the pharmacy, you must honour this request when the legislation allows prescription transfers.

As a pharmacist, you have an ethical duty to respect the autonomy and dignity of the client by facilitating a prescription transfer requested by the client (*Code of Ethics Bylaw, Principle II*). Further, by complying with a request from another pharmacist for a prescription copy, you meet ethical *Principle IX* by cooperating with colleagues and other health professionals in enabling clients to achieve their health care goals.

Prescription transfers for Schedule F drugs are enabled by the *Food and Drug Regulations*, sections C.01.041.1 and C.01.041.2. Before

you can fill a transferred prescription, you must have received a prescription copy from the transferring pharmacist. This copy may be verbal or written.

If you are transferring the prescription, you must provide the following information:

- your name and pharmacy name and address;
- the number of refills remaining on the prescription;
- the date of the last refill;
- the date that the prescription was first filled; and
- the prescription number.

You must inactivate a prescription you have transferred away, noting the date of transfer, and you must make no more sales pursuant to that prescription. In practical terms, if a pharmacy transfers away a prescription for a salbutamol inhaler with multiple refills, all the refills must be transferred. If the patient wanted only one inhaler at the distant pharmacy, that prescription must be filled and then transferred back to the originating pharmacy where a new prescription must be created, less the quantity provided at the distant pharmacy.

From time to time, a patient may present a prescription form with numerous orders on it, such as a discharge prescription, and want only one or two of the medications from your pharmacy. You can handle this situation in one of two ways:

- defer or log all the prescriptions on file and transfer them to the patient's choice of pharmacy at a later time; or

- make a copy of the prescription by hand or by photocopy. Fill the prescription for the drug requested by the patient. Indicate on the original the name of your pharmacy, and which prescriptions were filled and are consequently no longer valid. Give the original back to the patient and keep the copy in the pharmacy's file, appropriately numbered and documented.

If the prescription you fill is a narcotic, you must keep the original prescription. You may not give an unfilled, photocopied prescription to the patient as this is not a valid prescription. Unfilled prescriptions in this situation would have to be logged and later transferred.

Fax transmission of a prescription transfer is also allowable, and should contain the same information as a verbal transfer. Remember to ask for and record the name of the pharmacist requesting the transfer by fax.

Prescriptions for narcotics and controlled drugs **may not be transferred**. Benzodiazepine prescriptions may be transferred only once.

The process of transferring prescriptions contains the potential for error. Remember to speak clearly, repeat back information given to you over the phone, and carefully document names, prescription numbers and other demographic information so that you can double-check a prescription if doubt arises. Always choose safety over convenience.



Access to lab test results through Alberta Netcare “...an invaluable tool”

Community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians can now view lab test results through Alberta Netcare.

Pharmacists across Alberta are benefiting from an announcement on March 15, 2006 by Iris Evans, Minister of Health and Wellness, granting on-line access to lab results.

Lora Hager, pharmacist with Myro's pharmacy in Edmonton, works on-site with residents at mental health facilities and seniors' homes. She says not having access to lab results through Netcare was like “having one hand tied behind my back.”

Most of Lora's patients are on more than one drug at the same time. Access to Netcare, in particular to lab results, has been “an invaluable tool. It helps me monitor lab values to track and assess the required dosage.”

Lora actively uses Alberta Netcare to view test results including: creatinine tests to check kidney function, INR values to determine usage of anticoagulant drugs, electrolyte balance for diuretics, blood sugar levels for diabetics, drug levels to manage toxicity levels for patients on anti-epileptic medication, and liver

Lab values guidelines coming

In the May/June 2006 acp news, we indicated that the college would prepare guidelines for pharmacists using laboratory values. A working group has met and discussed potential content and parameters for the guidelines, and a first draft is being readied for review by the group.

The final document will be placed on the website; pharmacists will be notified when it is available.



Lora Hager, pharmacist (left); Nazia Mohammed, pharmacy technician; and Dwayne Samycia, pharmacist and owner Myros Pharmacy, using the Netcare system.

function tests to ensure safety of medications. The information gives Lora a better picture of her patients' health and helps her manage their compliance to drugs.

Pharmacy technician, Rose Schmid says, “The system is a bonus. Before access to Netcare I used to spend hours on the phone. Now I spend 20 minutes every morning looking up results for our patients on Clozaril. We have more than 70 patients on Clozaril, so the time saved is tremendous.”

Dwayne Samycia, pharmacist and owner of Myro's Pharmacy, employs a busy team of six pharmacists and ten pharmacy technicians serving Edmonton's inner city. Most of Dwayne's team uses Alberta Netcare.

“Patient care is our focus and, as more pharmacies sign-up, more patient information becomes available through Alberta Netcare, thereby helping us to be more effective in providing the highest level of care to our patients,” says Dwayne. “Whether we use Netcare for lab values or to view prescriptions or allergies, it helps us to make more informed decisions on patient care.”

Currently about 55 per cent of lab test results conducted in the province are available on-line. By late summer, it is expected that 85 per cent of all results will be available through Alberta Netcare. And now, lab test results are available to pharmacists in the

community. In addition, pharmacists can also view prescription and allergy information, which will enable them to provide more comprehensive advice to clients about prescriptions and over-the-counter medications.

For more information, contact the Alberta Netcare deployment team at: Edmonton phone: 780-642-4082 Toll free: 1-866-756-2647 E-mail: health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca ■

Submitted by Alberta Health and Wellness

TPPs from Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan's Triplicate Prescription Program (TPP) has become the Prescription Review Program, with an electronically monitored, expanded panel of drugs that includes amphetamines, benzodiazepines, anabolic steroids, barbiturates, chloral hydrate and most codeine-containing products.

Saskatchewan prescribers are no longer required to use special TPP forms to write prescriptions for these drugs. Prescribers must indicate on the prescriptions that they are valid for three days and must also include the patient's date of birth, address, the total quantity of medication prescribed in numerical and in written form, the patient's health services number, and the prescriber's name and address.

All prescriptions are recorded in the province's electronic system, therefore Saskatchewan pharmacists are no longer required to send a copy of the prescription to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan.

At this point we do not have information about how Alberta pharmacists should remit triplicate prescriptions to the program after they are filled. Until we have additional information, please hold the document in your prescription files. When we receive more detail, we'll forward it to you.

Information about the program, including a complete list of the drugs included in the program, is available on the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan website at www.quadrant.net/cpss/index.html. ■

News from

NAPRA

Here are some highlights from the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities.

- Dianne Donnan, ACP's president elect, has been appointed as Alberta's representative to NAPRA's Board of Directors.
- The board has approved a policy to clarify the status for products containing medicinal ingredients that are recommended for addition to Schedule F (Schedule F Recommended drugs). The policy indicates that these products be dispensed pursuant to a prescription. All of the official Health Canada Schedule F Recommended listings up to and including May 31, 2006 were placed in Schedule 1 of the National Drug Schedules. The policy is available on the NAPRA website at www.napra.org.
- Karen Wolfe, ACP's president in the 2005/06 year, has joined NAPRA as director of Pharmacy Practice Support.

New grads recognized by ACP

At this year's grad breakfast, UofA President and Vice-chancellor Dr. Indira Samarasekera greeted 2006 grads with a sincere "Bravo!" and congratulated them on reaching their graduation day. She encouraged them to remain active in their university, wherever their career takes them.

ACP President Jeff Whissell told the grads about five lessons he has learned along the way. They are: those who have the ability to do something, also have the responsibility to do so; turn your wounds into wisdom; put yourself in the shoes of others; you will become what you believe; and value your chosen profession. He also noted that the grads' future looks very promising, as does the profession's future, especially given the recent approval of the *Pharmacists Profession Regulation*.

Jeff had the privilege of announcing the winners of two major awards, including **Naomi Pich** who is the gold medal recipient, and **Janelle Rondeau**, the APSA Past President award winner. In addition, **Darren Pasay** from St. Joseph's General Hospital in Vegreville was named the Hospital Preceptor of the Year and **Vic Kalinka** from Calgary Co-op Pharmacy in Airdrie was named the Community Preceptor of the Year.



Darren Pasay

Vic Kalinka

Over 230 guests attended the annual breakfast, including graduands, their families and friends, ACP and Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences staff.

Congratulations Class of 2006! ■

Pharmacists play a role in meth arrests

You've been asked to watch for suspicious purchases related to methamphetamine production, and here's why.

The Oregon State Board of Pharmacy newsletter for May 2006 indicates that information provided by local pharmacists led to the arrest of four men and to shutting down a suspected drug house located within 1,000 feet from a preschool. Methamphetamine, pseudoephedrine, chemicals used to make meth, meth-making paraphernalia, and directions for making meth were all found in the home.

The article states that pharmacists alerted investigators after noticing two individuals purchasing large amounts of non-prescription medications containing pseudoephedrine. The pharmacists' reports showed that products were purchased from at least 13 different pharmacies. The pharmacists' partnership with the law enforcement agents was a key element of the investigation. You and your staff can play an important role in curbing the production of methamphetamine. Alert your local police if you notice unusual or suspicious purchases of meth ingredients. ■

Do you work with diabetes patients?

If you work with diabetes patients, Scot Simpson and his team from the UofA invite you to participate in a survey. They are intending to describe the services pharmacists provide to people with diabetes, so are asking about the services you offer.

The survey will take about 20 minutes if you complete the paper form; the electronic version may be faster.

Look for the insert in this newsletter with information about the survey and how to participate. ■

...from the faculty



The **Dean's golf tournament** hosted over 127 golfers at the Blackhawk Golf Course on June 1.

The weather cooperated and another very successful event contributed funds to support scholarships and bursaries for pharmacy students. The winning team in the 'par points' competition consisted of Shane O'Neill, Jerry Saik, Rob Ferguson and Richard Fong. The Texas scramble winners of the Espresso Cup were Dev Aggarwal, Merv Dusyk, Mike Fedorchuk and Mike Wolowyk. Sponsorship acknowledgement is posted on the faculty's website.

Thanks for the phenomenal support!

The **Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada** annual

conference was hosted by the faculty in Edmonton, June 2 to 6. Over 75 delegates from across North America met to discuss education issues and exchange the latest research. Many members of the faculty attended the Canadian Society of Pharmaceutical Scientists conference in Ottawa, May 24 to 27.

Pat Jacobsen, BSc. Pharm. 1976, has established a new award for a student from rural Alberta who has a satisfactory academic standing and demonstrates an interest in gerontology and community service.

The graduating **class of 2006** was treated to a bar-b-que at the Faculty Club following their final PEBC sitting on May 25. The Alberta Pharmacists'

Association sponsored the event and the Pharmacy Alumni Association presented each student with a gift. Tony Nikonchuk was announced as this year's recipient of the Apotex Future Leader Award.

The **Chancellor's Cup** golf tournament, held June 5 at the Edmonton Country Club, was an opportunity for every faculty to interact with business and community leaders from across Alberta. Pharmacy students and representatives from PADIS promoted crystal meth awareness by showcasing Ebony, a drug dog, and her role in drug education in Edmonton public schools. Constable Doug Green of the Edmonton Police Service demonstrated Ebony's expertise in searching for drugs. ■

In memory



Clifford King died on May 23, 2006 at the age of 85 years.

Cliff graduated from the UofA in 1943 and registered with the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association in 1945. After serving with the RCAF as a pilot officer, he opened King Drug in Vegreville and ran it until 1991. He also owned the pharmacy at the Vegreville hospital. In partnership with Clay Richardson, they opened King Drug in Hinton in 1956.

Cliff was a member of the first board of directors for the Northwest Drug Wholesale when it became a limited company.

Ronald G. McIntyre died on April 21, 2006 at the age of 89 years.

Ron graduated from the UofA in 1943 and registered with the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association in the same year. He was a pharmacist dispenser in the army and former co-owner of Temple City Drug in Cardston. He also operated McIntyre Drug in Nanton from 1951 to 1983. He served as a councillor in Nanton from 1960 to 1966.

Gerald Bryce Richards died May 31, 2006 at the age of 79 years.

Gerald graduated from the UofS in 1949 and registered in Alberta in 1952. He practised at the Calgary General Hospital and Calgary and Strathmore Co-ops. He also was a pharmaceutical representative for a number of years. While in semi-retirement he worked at a variety of community pharmacies.