Research Highlights

Understanding Pharmacy Mark-Up in Canada

Expenditure for pharmaceutical drugs represents the second largest cost to the Canadian health care system, following hospital costs and recently surpassing spending for physician services. A number of different inputs contribute to the retail price for pharmaceuticals, few of which are well understood by consumers. This briefing explores the inputs and costs which are reflected in the final retail cost of pharmaceuticals, sheds some light on how pharmacy mark-ups are determined, and discusses some key themes and opportunities fueling public debate.

Key findings include:

- Several factors contribute to the retail cost of prescription medications, including the ingredient cost, pharmacy mark-up, wholesaler up-charge, and dispensing fee.
- Out of $1.3 billion in public prescription drug expenditure in 2015-16, drug costs accounted for 74.7 per cent of spending, while dispensing fees represented 21.8 per cent and mark-ups 3.5 per cent.
- Pharmacy mark-up is an amount that can be added to the ingredient cost of a prescription medication, and helps pay for the costs of running a pharmacy.
- Mark-ups can vary across several variables such as location, drug coverage under public or private insurance, or whether the drug is considered high-cost. Other factors, such as confidential discounts and recent changes in the distribution system for prescription drugs also impact costs.

This report will be published this fall, and CFH and CASHC members will receive a pre-release copy.

Whole Health Innovation Collaborative Meeting Highlights: Applying Precision to Preventative Health and Personalized Medicine

The April 25, 2017 collaborative meeting brought CASHC, CFH, and CHL members together to explore how innovation can be applied and better leveraged across the subthemes of public and population health, health care system functioning and design, and workplace health and wellness.

Some key findings from the event include:

- Health innovation encompasses numerous areas such as applying the latest technologies (e.g., drugs, medical devices equipment, and organization), adopting behavioural economics, and improving delivery.
- Innovation is a net driver of health care costs and more process innovation is needed to reduce these costs.
- To bend the cost curve, we need to focus on prevention, at-risk individuals, and early warning signs and symptoms.
- Improving Canada’s research to commercialization chain requires removing patenting process roadblocks and providing adequate tech transfer and commercialization funding.
- Canada needs to improve its spread and scale measurement capabilities, leverage clinical trials and health care economies to improve pathways and accelerate uptake, and apply outcomes-based payment and partnership principles.
- Canada has a great deal of innovative capacity and can position itself as a health system innovation leader. A precision health approach to interventions presents unique opportunities to enhance health and well-being while delivering value for money.

See the Meeting Highlights for additional information on the meeting’s key findings.
Upcoming Events

Moving Ahead: Living Healthy, Active Lives Across the Lifespan

The Council for Healthy Living (CHL)
Schedule: November 7, 2017, Ottawa
Description: Elements of a healthy and active lifestyle include the integration of appropriate levels of physical activity, nutrition, and sleep, while avoiding or limiting negative behaviours including smoking and substance abuse. Many argue that if an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure, then why do we continue to struggle to support Canadians in living healthy, active lives?

The Council for Healthy Living will convene national key stakeholders for an interactive day-long session on the value of investing in healthy living and active living across the lifespan and the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration. We will examine the challenges and opportunities to improve healthy lifestyles for all ages and all communities, and identify ways to “move ahead” in injury and chronic disease prevention.

Navigating the Future of eHealth

The Canadian Alliance for Sustainable Health Care (CASHC)
Schedule: November 8, 2017, Ottawa
Description: Information technology (IT) plays a crucial role in health care today and its role is likely to grow in importance in the future. The ability to collect, store, and analyse a vast quantity of data holds tremendous promise for research, innovation, and better health care outcomes. Being able to quickly and easily share information, including health records and patient data, could play a major role in improving diagnoses and patient care as well as driving efficiencies. However, the wealth of information held within the health care industry is also a prime target for hackers. Full medical records are far more expensive on the dark web than a stack of stolen credit card details. Globally, health care has generated some of the biggest data breaches we have witnessed over the last few years. While IT offers a lot of promise, it also creates some significant risks. How will this play out in the future and what can we do today to ensure a positive outcome?

During a strategic foresight session, we will explore scenarios and their impact on health care and use them to identify research needs for supporting health care stakeholders to move towards a more positive future with regards to information sharing and cyber security. Strategic foresight offers tools to envision a range of futures, explore the uncertainties generated by a rapidly evolving environment, and gain a better understanding of how our choices might be impacted by change and what we can do today to move us towards a preferred future.

Transforming Health Care: Optimizing Innovation and Digital Health Technologies

The Centre for the Future of Health (CFH)
Schedule: November 9, 2017, Ottawa
Description: Innovation and Digital Technology is crucial to ensure sustainability and quality improvement for Canada’s health care system. However, identifying the right strategies to pursue and infrastructures to implement is not always clear or easy. Great ideas and solutions come from inspired people with the ambition and know-how to take on complex challenges. But ideas need systemic support to lead to action.

The future of health and health care in Canada will be dominated by innovation, digital technology, new health care roles, outcome/value-based health care, participatory medicine, and scientific breakthroughs that will enable us to live longer, healthier lives. The Centre will convene thought-provoking national and international leaders to share, explore, and collaborate on how innovation and digital health technologies help us improve our ability to measure value, eliminate waste and inefficiency, and engage patients in the Canadian health care system. We will discuss how to achieve provincial alignment with privacy, health records, and system improvements, while exploring how to move across deep silos with common measurements and care consistency.

To register, email cripps@conferenceboard.ca and indicate whether you are a CHL, CFH, or CASHC member. If you’re unable to attend, we recommend you send a delegate on your behalf to take full advantage of your benefits.

Contact: Shannon Cripps, Network Manager, Health Economics and Policy, 613-526-3090 x262, cripps@conferenceboard.ca
# Events and Webinars at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events and Webinars (click on the title for more details)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates &amp; Times (EDT)</th>
<th>Waived for members of</th>
<th>Discounted for members of</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Road Map to Health System Sustainability: A Clear Imperative to Enhance Health</td>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>September 26, 2:00 PM</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shannon Cripps – <a href="mailto:Cripps@conferenceboard.ca">Cripps@conferenceboard.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gastrointestinal infections in Nunavut and Nunavik: Time to abandon outdated approaches to diagnostic service delivery</td>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>October 5, 2:00 PM</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community-Acquired Pneumonia: A Webinar on the Economic Impact and Post-Discharge Pathway</td>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>October 19, 2:00 PM</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shannon Cripps – <a href="mailto:Cripps@conferenceboard.ca">Cripps@conferenceboard.ca</a></td>
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<td>The Better Workplace Conference 2017</td>
<td>Toronto, ON</td>
<td>October 24-26</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
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<td>Public Sector Social Media 2017</td>
<td>Ottawa, ON</td>
<td>October 31-31</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
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<td>CHL Members’ Fall Meeting</td>
<td>Ottawa, ON</td>
<td>November 7</td>
<td>CHL, CASHC, CFH</td>
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<td>November 8</td>
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<td>Ottawa, ON</td>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>CFH, CASHC, CHL</td>
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<td>Shannon Cripps – <a href="mailto:Cripps@conferenceboard.ca">Cripps@conferenceboard.ca</a></td>
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<td>Our Land, Our Future: National Summit on Indigenous Youth and Natural Resource Development</td>
<td>Calgary, AB</td>
<td>November 21-22</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
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<td>Public Sector Transformation 2017: Deliverology, Data, Digitization</td>
<td>Ottawa, ON</td>
<td>November 28-29</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Food &amp; Drink Summit 2017: Measuring Performance, Taking Stock, Inspiring Action</td>
<td>Calgary, AB</td>
<td>December 5-6</td>
<td>CASHC, CFH, CHL</td>
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## Complimentary or Discounted Webinar Recordings

CASHC, CFH, and CHL members have access to [recorded Conference Board webinars](#) at no or reduced fee. Please contact Robyn Mia at [Mia@conferenceboard.ca](mailto:Mia@conferenceboard.ca) and indicate which network you belong to. Example webinars include:

- Stretched Too Thin: The Demand for Physiotherapy Services in Canada
- Innovation in Cardiovascular Disease Management: The Impact of PCSK9 Inhibitors
- Expanding Pharmacy Services in Canada: Measuring the Opportunity
- Future Care for Canadian Seniors: A Webinar Primer on Nursing Supply and Demand
- Improving Home Care Standards: An Innovative Approach to a National Challenge
- Palliative Care Matters: Fostering Change in Canadian Health Care
- Improving Home Care Standards: An Innovative Approach to a National Challenge
- Placemaking & Mobility: Creating Healthy, Sustainable Communities using Evidence-Based Healthy Built Environment Indicators
- Accessibility Audit 101: Design for Diversity and Equality
- Navigating Health Care for Children: The NaviCare/SoinsNavi Solution
- Healthy Outcomes for Canadian Seniors: Not a Cost Curve to be Bent
Resources

Please contact us if you require access to any of the following resources. We would be happy to assist you.

All Health-Related Publications to Date

All of the Canadian Alliance for Sustainable Health Care (CASHC) publications are accessible to the general public at no charge on our website. For all health-related publications from the Conference Board of Canada, visit our e-library.

Previous Health Events

Select health-related recorded webinars, presentations, and conference proceedings are available to members of the CASHC, CFH, and CHL. A full listing can be found on our website.

Other Research & Reports

- Funding Models for Physician Assistants: Canadian and International Experiences
- The Juggling Act: Balancing Work and Eldercare in Canada
- Seniors in Transition: Exploring Pathways Across the Care Continuum
- Core Quality and Outcome Measures for Pediatric Health
- The Impact of Primary Care Practice Transformation on Cost, Quality, and Utilization: A Systematic Review of Research Published in 2016
- Growth of Skilled Nursing Facility Specialists: Navigating Between What Is Ideal and What is Practical
- The Rising Trend of Nonphysician Provider Utilization in Healthcare: A Follow-up to the MGMA 2014 Research and Analysis Report
- Effects of substituting nurse practitioners, physician assistants or nurses for physicians concerning healthcare for the ageing population: a systematic literature review
- A Research Agenda for Communication Between Health Care Professionals and Patients Living With Serious Illness
- Alcohol Harm in Canada: Examining Hospitalizations Entirely Caused by Alcohol and Strategies to Reduce Alcohol Harm

News, Commentaries, and Other Events

- End-of-life care: Assist your loved ones with clear instructions
- Put critical mental health care within reach of all
- Big Pharma marketing scheme banned by Ontario
- Health Canada moves to ban non-prescription codeine sales
- ‘Impossible’: Senior police officials tell MPs they won’t be ready for legal cannabis
- Harvard Medical School: Simple Tool for Safer Surgery
- The Proven Dangers of Sedentary Habits and What You Can do About Them
- FitforWork: Men and mental health at work
- Data Blog: Mood & Anxiety Disorders in Canada
- Health Secretary challenges NHS to deliver digital services nationwide
- ‘We finally have tools to end HIV’, doctor declares after 40% drop in diagnoses
- Healthydebate: What are the health impacts of forest fires?

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Follow @ConfBoardofCda for updates from The Conference Board of Canada’s corporate account

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