

NAPRA NOTES

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As the year 2017 winds down, this issue of *NAPRA Notes* highlights some of the organization's achievements, ongoing projects and forthcoming changes.

Release of Cannabis Position Statement

In anticipation of upcoming legislation to legalize cannabis as promised by the federal government, NAPRA held a discussion in March 2017 with various stakeholders to discuss the role of pharmacy practitioners and the effects on public safety.

Following these fruitful consultations, NAPRA prepared a draft cannabis position statement. On April 13, 2017, the Government of Canada proposed the *Cannabis Act* to legalize, strictly regulate and restrict access to cannabis. NAPRA's members re-

visited the position statement in the context of the proposed federal bill and released its [Cannabis Position Statement](#) in July 2017. The release stated NAPRA's position in regards to the role of pharmacy practitioners pertaining to non-medical cannabis, which is that "pharmacy practitioners must not be involved in the distribution of cannabis for non-medical purposes." The statement also indicated NAPRA's stance on other aspects related to cannabis: that non-medical cannabis distribution sites must not use misleading words such as "dispensary" or symbols generally associated with pharmacies (e.g. a green cross), that cannabis producers be required to follow good production practices and meet appropriate labelling and packaging requirements and that advertising and marketing on cannabis products should be restricted.

As this issue is increasingly of public interest, NAPRA and its members continue to monitor ongoing activities at the provincial, territorial and national levels, such as the recent release of a proposed federal regulatory framework for cannabis. Feedback will be shared with the government of Canada as part of the consultation process for the framework.

Changes to NAPRA Governance

In 2017, NAPRA continued its efforts toward a significant change in its governance. After careful consideration, the formal changes required to allow for the change in governance were approved during a special meeting of the members in November 2017. Among other changes aimed at making NAPRA more effective and responsive, a key change at its Board level is that NAPRA's Board of Directors will be comprised of the registrars of the of the provincial colleges, representatives from the territories and Canadian Forces, and up to three other individuals who will meet specific needs identified by NAPRA.

Margot Priddle (Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board) now serves as Chair of the Board with Nancy Lum-Wilson (Ontario College of Pharmacists) serving as Vice Chair. A complete list of the [Board members](#) can be found on our website. Full implementation of the new model will follow in 2018.

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GATEWAY
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The [Pharmacists' Gateway Canada](#) initiative continues to be a success: the Gateway has received a higher than expected number of enrolments in 2017, and Client Services has responded to over 3600 inquiries. Enhancements to Pharmacists' Gateway Canada were completed and implemented in July 2017. The user experience has been improved, the platform has been updated and the system's security has been strengthened to be in line with current industry standards. It is expected that Gateway operations will continue to be busy in 2018.

.pharmacy Program

The .pharmacy initiative aims to identify safe and legitimate online pharmacies. The program is run by a key partner of NAPRA, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy in the U.S., in collaboration with various stakeholders around the world.



The majority of online pharmacies operating in Canada sell drugs from foreign locations. When drugs are purchased from countries that do not have strict regulations in place, they can cause serious health risks to the unsuspecting public. The .pharmacy initiative aims to reduce these risks by identifying legitimate sites that sell approved medications from identifiable sources. To date, six Canadian pharmacies have applied for and received a .pharmacy URL. As awareness of the program increases, we anticipate more Canadian online pharmacy businesses will see the value of the .pharmacy domain name. NAPRA continues to support and to promote the operation of this initiative in Canada. To apply for a domain name, to consult an up-to-date list of registered online pharmacies, or to find out more about the program, visit <https://www.safe.pharmacy/>.

National Pharmacy Technician Bridging Education Program

At the beginning of the year, the number of licensed pharmacy technicians across Canada was 7,339. The Bridging Program continues to be offered in select jurisdictions only. For more information including course registration deadlines, please visit the [NAPRA website](#).



What is the Bridging Program? The National Pharmacy Technician Bridging Education Program enables individuals who worked as pharmacy technicians before regulation was introduced, to upgrade their skills to align with changes in the scope of practice of pharmacy technicians without having to return to school to complete a full-time training program.

2016-2017 Annual Report

NAPRA's Annual Report is now available on the NAPRA [website](#). The report contains messages from NAPRA's outgoing President, Anjali Acharya, and from Executive Director, Adele Fifield, as well as the auditor's report and the audited financial statements.

Sign Up to Receive Updates from the National Drug Schedules (NDS) Notice Board

Important information and updates related to the National Drug Schedules and the National Drug Scheduling Advisory Committee (NDSAC)—such as upcoming meeting dates, scheduling recommendations and changes to the committee's membership—are posted regularly to the [NDS Notice Board](#) on the NAPRA website. To have your name added to the Drug Scheduling External Liaison Group (DSELG) distribution list, visit our [website](#) and complete the easy-to-follow instructions. Of note, DSELG members

receive about one email per month.

UBC 2018 Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences Alumni Agent of Change Award

Congratulations to NAPRA Board member Bob Nakagawa on being named as the recipient of this special award from the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of British Columbia. This award is presented to alumni whose career demonstrates an impact on the field of pharmacy. Bob is recognized for his numerous contributions as a hospital pharmacist and a public health administrator. Bob also worked for the provincial Ministry of Health for the province serving as assistant deputy minister of the Pharmaceutical Services Division. In addition, Bob is also valued for his contributions to the profession through his work with the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists, the College of Pharmacists of BC, the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities and his work with numerous committees at the provincial and federal levels.

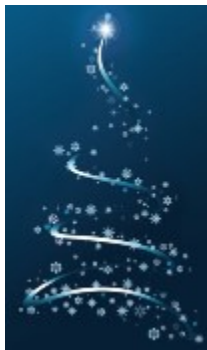
Farewell to Two Members of the NAPRA Team

After ten years of dedicated service to the organization as a Program Officer, Lucy Doré retired in the early part of September. We extend our sincerest thanks for her outstanding work and dedication to the association. We hope that her retirement is filled with long drives down the fairway and all of her rocks hitting the button after travelling down the curling sheet.

NAPRA would also like to thank Sarah Jennings who stepped in as Sarah Marshall's maternity leave replacement for the last year. As the Acting Manager of Professional and Regulatory Affairs, Sarah acted as Committee Secretary for two NDSAC meetings and played an important role in the publication of NAPRA's Position Statement on cannabis. We wish her all the best in her new role at the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists and welcome back Sarah Marshall to the team.

What's Next?

The year ahead will be yet another ambitious one for the NAPRA team. On the horizon for 2018, activities include: renewal of NAPRA's model standards of practice documents; further enhancements to the Gateway program and its tools; exploration of opportunities for the Bridging Program curriculum in 2018 and beyond; and continuation of a dialogue with Health Canada on a number of key topics including the Self-Care Framework and NAPRA's contributions to address the opioid crisis. In addition, the third and final document in NAPRA's suite of model standards for compounding will be released in 2018. Watch the NAPRA website for news of the publication.



**From all of us at NAPRA, we wish
you a safe and happy holiday
season
and a joyous new year.**
