

# The Value of an Alliance in Unprecedented Times



# About Us

## Who We Are

The National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) is an alliance of provincial and territorial pharmacy regulatory bodies and the Canadian Forces Pharmacy Services.

## Our Members

Our members regulate the practice of pharmacy in their respective jurisdictions in Canada and their primary mandate is protecting and serving the public interest.

### **Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities**

Alberta College of Pharmacy  
Canadian Armed Forces – Pharmacy Services Division  
College of Pharmacists of British Columbia  
College of Pharmacists of Manitoba  
Community Services – Government of Yukon  
New Brunswick College of Pharmacists  
Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board  
Government of the Northwest Territories  
Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists  
Government of Nunavut  
Ontario College of Pharmacists  
Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec  
Prince Edward Island College of Pharmacy  
Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals

## What We Do

We provide a platform for our members to discuss and take a national approach in addressing common issues in the practice of pharmacy in Canada.

# Our Board of Directors

**Back row:** Lieutenant-Colonel Sean Meredith (Canadian Armed Forces – Pharmacy Services Division), David Collie (external Director), Michelle Wyand (Prince Edward Island College of Pharmacy), Bev Zwicker (Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists), Greg Eberhart (Alberta College of Pharmacy), Jeana Wendel (Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals), Tana Yoon (external Director), David Cameron (external Director)

**Front row:** Bob Nakagawa (College of Pharmacists of British Columbia), Margot Priddle (Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board), Adele Fifield, NAPRA Executive Director (ex-officio), Nancy Lum-Wilson, Chair (Ontario College of Pharmacists), Sam Lanctin, Vice Chair (New Brunswick College of Pharmacists)

**Absent:** Donna Mulvey (Government of Nunavut), Manon Lambert (Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec), Susan Lessard-Friesen (College of Pharmacists of Manitoba), Nancy Meagher (Community Services – Government of Yukon), Samantha Van Genne (Government of the Northwest Territories)



# The Value of an Alliance in Unprecedented Times

Message from the Chair and Executive Director

*Nancy Lum-Wilson, Chair of the Board*



*Adele Fifield, Executive Director*



As the alliance of provincial and territorial Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (PRAs) in Canada as well as the Canadian Forces Pharmacy Services, NAPRA exists to serve its members as they pursue their primary mandate of protecting and serving the public interest in pharmacy regulation in their respective jurisdictions. Never has the value of the alliance been as clear as in this year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated challenges.

In early 2020, as the pandemic swept across the world and across Canada, stressing health care systems and disrupting health care delivery, the pivotal role of pharmacy professionals and pharmacy in patient care was starkly highlighted as pharmacists and pharmacy technicians continued to work on the frontlines of pandemic response providing essential services. Pharmacy professionals saw their responsibilities shift and expand to meet novel patient care needs even as they managed multiple challenges such as drug shortages, personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitizer scarcity especially in the first months, and regulatory barriers to patient care during the pandemic. NAPRA's members, the PRAs, focused their attention on regulatory and policy changes to support pharmacy professionals in addressing this new reality, and NAPRA quickly shifted gears to assist its members in any way that was required.

As will be detailed further on, NAPRA immediately established an exchange forum where the PRAs could share information related to COVID-19 and address any developing issues; facilitated linkages with Health Canada as well as numerous other Canadian and international stakeholders; and started publishing an extensive repository of information on COVID-19 for the exclusive use of NAPRA members. Organized around some 30 regulatory topics pertinent to NAPRA members, this repository was revised nearly continually in the first months of the pandemic to keep abreast of new developments as they arose and ensure the PRAs had the most up to date and relevant information at their disposal. NAPRA thus provided significant informational and logistical support to its members, allowing them to focus on their regulatory responsibilities more fully as they worked to rapidly deal with changing public health needs. Moreover, NAPRA's members and its Board of Directors agreed to postpone noncritical activities that were planned for 2020, and that directly involved the PRAs and their staff, to allow them to focus their time and attention on the pandemic.



Despite the unique challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the unforeseen yet time-intensive initiatives NAPRA and its team undertook in response to assist the PRAs, NAPRA managed to advance a number of its planned activities in 2020, keeping essential programs and services operating while remaining responsive and adaptive to shifting needs as the pandemic evolved. The National Drug Schedules were maintained and NAPRA continued to effectively manage Pharmacists' Gateway Canada, adapting as needed to COVID-related challenges. As part of the three-year Pilot Program to Prepare for Practical Training (P4T) launched in 2019 to facilitate a smoother entry to pharmacy practice in Canada for international pharmacy graduates (IPGs), nine mentorships were successfully completed in 2020, with additional mentorships initiated and expected to be completed in 2021. NAPRA pursued its work to further the goals of its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, including refining its draft principles of professionalism in pharmacy practice as well as developing and sharing with PRAs for consultation a draft strategy to govern cross-jurisdictional practices within Canada.

Finally, NAPRA continued to develop and maintain collaborative engagements with the federal government and other stakeholders, on COVID-related issues as mentioned above as well as on other matters of mutual interest. While NAPRA has always put emphasis on its efforts to foster and sustain solid working relationships with relevant organizations, it saw the depth and frequency of its engagement increase substantially in the early months of the pandemic, clearly highlighting the importance of working in alliance in these unprecedented times.

The remarkable working relationship between NAPRA's Board and its staff was critical to how well the organization managed to navigate the myriad of new challenges the pandemic brought. We are grateful for the dedication and flexibility shown by each and every one, and the countless ways in which all contributed to not only keep the organization's core work moving forward but seamlessly stepped up to take on new issues and initiatives in support of the PRAs.

As we look back on this past year, we see NAPRA's role in helping its members navigate the challenges brought by the pandemic as demonstrating the clear value of an alliance like NAPRA in times when its members face urgent and complex matters. As pharmacy professionals remain in service on the frontlines of the pandemic response, NAPRA will keep working hand-in-hand with its members to provide the support required as they strive to ensure that the Canadian public continues to receive appropriate pharmacy care. We will continue to adapt to new conditions as they arise and work hard to keep advancing and strengthening NAPRA in its critical role as the alliance of pharmacy regulators in Canada.

*N. Lum-Wilson*

*A. Zij*

# Mission

National leadership in the pursuit of pharmacy regulatory excellence.

# Vision

Best pharmacy regulation, best pharmacy practice, best patient care.

## Values

### Leadership

We provide strong, innovative and proactive leadership in the regulation of pharmacy practice.

### Excellence

We commit to quality in all of our activities to support serving the public interest.

### Integrity

We act with integrity, honesty and in an ethical manner with each other, our partners and our stakeholders.

### Respect

We recognize, consider and value the contributions and differences of others, and treat everyone respectfully. We resolve issues openly and constructively.

### Transparency

We communicate our purpose and objectives clearly. We strive for openness in what we do and the decisions we take.

### Collaboration

We value collaboration both within NAPRA and with stakeholders. We seek to build productive relationships at all levels.

## Purpose

As an alliance of pharmacy regulatory authorities, NAPRA provides:

1. Leadership on national policy issues;
2. Harmonization of standards to reinforce their credibility, dependability, and acceptance;
3. A national, central point of contact for communication and engagement with pan-Canadian and international stakeholders;
4. A community of practice for pharmacy regulatory authorities across Canada to address common issues and share knowledge and experiences relevant to pharmacy regulation.



# Governance

Mindful that good governance is essential to the effective operation of the organization and to its continued success, NAPRA had completed in 2018-2019 a multi-step transition to a more agile and modernized governance structure, including a new Board composed of the Registrars of the provincial pharmacy regulatory authorities; representatives of the territories and the Canadian Armed Forces; three new external directors; and an updated framework indicating how Committees, Task Forces, and Working Groups are used to facilitate the work. Moreover, NAPRA undertook in 2019 an in-depth risk assessment exercise which examined all aspects of the organization's operations, with a view to identifying and mitigating risk factors and reinforcing its capacity to ably respond to emergency or crisis situations.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the vital importance of having a strong governance structure in place when faced with sudden disruption and uncertainty. Thanks to the groundwork that had already been laid pre-pandemic, the NAPRA Board was well-positioned to adapt to the new reality quickly and capably. As organizational needs and priorities shifted throughout 2020, the Board provided clear and timely guidance to facilitate the work of NAPRA staff under these new circumstances and to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the organization's operations. While it was inevitable that certain activities planned for the year had to be postponed to 2021, NAPRA was able to move forward on significant portions of its 2020 work plan despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

To ensure a measure of stability for both NAPRA and its member organizations in such unparalleled times, the Board extended the terms of the Chair and Vice Chair for an additional year (2020-2021). Throughout 2020, the Board was kept apprised of NAPRA's risk status and any adaptations to its activities that were required to meet the organization's changing needs and priorities due to the pandemic. This allowed the Board to continue to play its monitoring role effectively and to remain prepared to respond to contingencies as they arose.

# Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic



When the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic in March 2020, NAPRA and its team quickly pivoted to supporting NAPRA members in any way they needed, a focus which the organization maintained through the rest of the year.

While its members dealt directly with the pharmacy regulatory issues brought about by the pandemic, NAPRA deployed its support along three principal lines, namely establishing a knowledge-exchange forum, facilitating stakeholder engagement, and researching and consolidating pandemic-related information.

NAPRA's knowledge-exchange forum, where members met regularly in a virtual forum, provided a key central venue for sharing information across the 14 jurisdictions that NAPRA's members represent and for addressing pertinent issues as they arose. NAPRA also facilitated meetings with relevant stakeholders to discuss pandemic-related topics as appropriate. This was especially critical in the first few months of the pandemic as all grappled with a rapidly evolving situation and shifting public health recommendations. The knowledge-exchange forum also provided NAPRA an important and timely avenue to update its members on the matters on which NAPRA was engaging with stakeholders on their behalf.

In its facilitation role, NAPRA provided a central point of contact between the pharmacy regulatory authorities and the federal government. This entailed frequent daily interactions with various departments within Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada, on all matters pertinent to NAPRA's members, including regulatory changes to scope of practice to facilitate continuity of care, managing supply and mitigating shortages of drugs and other health products (e.g., personal protective equipment, hand sanitizers), management of controlled substances, COVID-19 testing and vaccination, and other regulatory and practice issues affected by the pandemic.



Moreover, NAPRA, on behalf of its members, engaged on similar issues with non-governmental stakeholders, including educational organizations, pharmacy and pharmacy professional associations, the pharmaceutical industry, and international organizations such as the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and the International Pharmaceutical Federation.

Finally, NAPRA researched and consolidated extensive information on COVID-19-related issues, with a focus on regulatory matters of relevance to its members, in a repository which it regularly revised and shared with them. Organized around some 30 topics, touching on everything from general guidance for pharmacy professionals to information from each of the provincial/territorial jurisdictions to pan-Canadian and international scans of relevant topics, the COVID-19 repository of information grew to become an over 200-page long resource document where NAPRA's members could find all relevant updates collected in one central place. In the nine months between its first publication on March 24, 2020, and the end of the year, the repository was updated and re-published 58 times (many more iterations would come in 2021) and has been an extremely valuable contribution to the pharmacy regulatory community's role in addressing the pandemic.

In 2019, the NAPRA office had taken steps to better define and streamline its work processes, including implementing approaches to allow for more remote work. This proactive and positive undertaking allowed NAPRA staff to smoothly transition to working remotely when pandemic lockdowns were mandated in March 2020. The NAPRA team was thus able to not only quickly develop and launch new COVID-19-related initiatives to provide comprehensive and timely assistance to NAPRA's members as described above, but also to keep working actively and effectively within the planned activities of NAPRA's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.



# 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

NAPRA's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan comprises the effective operation of the organization's programs and services as well as the advancement of five specific goals over the stated period.

The National Pharmacy Technician Bridging Education Program having come to an end in 2019, after successfully completing its purpose of transitioning individuals already working in a pharmacy technician capacity into fully regulated pharmacy technicians, NAPRA concentrated its efforts in 2020 on moving forward its other programs and services.

## NAPRA's programs and services are:

National Drug Schedules

Pharmacists Gateway Canada for international pharmacy graduates

Standard, Competency and Guidance development

Engagement activities at the Federal government level, and with national and international stakeholders

NAPRA's programs and services for its members are in support of the **Mobility Agreement for Canadian Pharmacists (MACP)** which facilitates the movement of pharmacists across Canada.

In addition to NAPRA's programs and services, the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan outlines five specific strategic goals that address its members' current and emerging concerns and enable NAPRA to provide leadership on priority policy and cross-jurisdictional issues. NAPRA's work plan for 2020 included action items to advance goals #1 to #4 as outlined below, while goal #5 was scheduled to be initiated in 2021.

# 2019-2023 NAPRA Strategic Plan

In addition to its core programs and services, NAPRA has committed to **five goals**.

1



## Restore the culture of professionalism within pharmacy practice

**Develop and support the integration of a clearly defined set of tenets of professionalism into the practice of pharmacy professionals, regulatory authorities, pharmacy employers and other stakeholders**

**Progress:** Draft principles of professionalism, first elaborated in 2019, were refined in 2020 and it was decided that a related white paper would be revised to accommodate new perspectives gained as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Extensive consultations to finalize the principles of professionalism are to be undertaken in 2021.

2



## Develop a draft strategy related to cross-jurisdictional practices within Canada

**Establish principles, and develop a draft strategy, related to cross-jurisdictional practices for pharmacy regulatory authorities to use in service of public interest**

**Progress:** A draft strategy related to cross-jurisdictional practices within Canada was developed in 2020 and shared with pharmacy regulatory authorities for consultation.

3



## Modernize key NAPRA documents and create new standards for the reporting and analyzing of and learning from medication-related incidents

**Develop and implement a five-year renewal schedule of NAPRA's documents, including the development of standards and a common data set for reporting and learning from medication-related incidents**

**Progress:** In 2020, NAPRA's top priority was supporting its members during the COVID-19 pandemic. Beyond that, it also progressed the Model Standards of Practice for Continuous Quality Improvement and Medication Incident Reporting by Pharmacy Professionals, with the expectation to publish them in early 2021. Revisions were also undertaken for the Model Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians in Canada and work began on Model Compounding Competencies for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technician in Canada. For more on NAPRA's work to advance strategic goal #3: **Standards, Guidance, and Competencies**



# 2019-2023 NAPRA Strategic Plan

In addition to its core programs and services, NAPRA has committed to **five goals**.

4



## Review the role of NAPRA in the National Drug Schedules program

Conduct consultations with its members and stakeholders, including Health Canada, on the National Drug Schedules in Canada and NAPRA's role in providing this program

**Progress:** Beyond supporting the PRAs during the COVID-19 pandemic, NAPRA was able to also continue ongoing work towards modernizing and updating the NDS program in 2020. For more information on NDS-related work conducted by NAPRA in 2020: [National Drug Schedules](#).

5



## Establish an impartial assessment framework focused on pharmacy regulatory authority continuous improvement

Explore options for the establishment of an impartial assessment framework, tools, and methodology to support the continuous improvement processes of the pharmacy regulatory authorities, in line with best practices in self-governance and regulation

**Progress:** Consideration of a possible assessment tool for benchmarking and continuous quality improvement will be initiated in 2021.

STRATEGY-





# Pharmacists' Gateway Canada

All international pharmacy graduates (IPGs) who wish to practise pharmacy in Canada, except in the province of Quebec, must enroll in **Pharmacists' Gateway Canada** (Gateway) as their first step in the process to become a licensed pharmacist in Canada. NAPRA administers and maintains the Gateway in support of its members, the pharmacy regulatory authorities (PRAs), who are responsible for regulating all pharmacists in Canada, including IPGs.

The public-facing part of Gateway provides pertinent, clear and complete information to the thousands of IPGs each year seeking to learn how to become licensed pharmacists in Canada. Gateway guides applicants through every step in the licensure process for each province and territory and helps IPGs identify what requirements can be completed before arriving in Canada. Additionally, IPGs enrolled in Gateway have access to self-assessment tools specifically designed to assist them in learning about pharmacy practice in Canada and in identifying areas where additional knowledge and skills may be required to meet Canadian entry-to-practice competencies.

By providing an online resource and portal where IPGs can find licensing information, self-assessment tools and guidance through the licensure process from start to finish, as well as establishing a central national document repository supporting seamless communication among relevant parties (IPGs, PRAs, the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada and NAPRA), Gateway significantly simplifies and streamlines the process for all involved.

Between its implementation date of August 20, 2014, and December 31, 2020, Gateway has had a total of 15,779 enrolments. There were just over 2,850 new enrolments in 2020.



**[www.pharmacistsgatewaycanada.ca](http://www.pharmacistsgatewaycanada.ca)**  
**[gatewayinfo@napra.ca](mailto:gatewayinfo@napra.ca)**  
**613 569-9800**



# Pilot Program to Prepare for Practical Training (P4T)

In 2019, NAPRA launched the **Pilot Program to Prepare for Practical Training (P4T)**, a three-year pilot project that offers IPGs pursuing licensure in Canada several practical resources which facilitate a smoother entry to pharmacy practice in Canada. P4T specifically addresses the learning and skill gaps that have been identified as barriers to success for IPGs seeking to become licensed pharmacists in Canada and includes:

- A mentorship program that matches IPGs with experienced Canadian pharmacists, providing IPGs with a unique opportunity for hands-on learning
- An online diagnostic tool which helps IPGs assess any gaps they may have in three areas of knowledge (knowledge of the Canadian healthcare system, cultural diversity and awareness, and professional communication)
- Three interactive online learning modules to which IPGs are directed based on the results provided by the diagnostic tool and which help IPGs fill any knowledge gaps identified in the assessment phase

P4T is funded by the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program and is guided by a steering committee comprised of representatives from pharmacy regulatory authorities, a mentor representative, and an IPG representative.

Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdowns, all but one of the 10 pilot mentorships launched in late 2019 were successfully completed in 2020. The mentorship program was improved based on feedback from mentors and mentees that participated in the pilot effort and was fully launched in Fall 2020. Additional successful matches were made that continued into 2021.

The diagnostic tool and three learning modules were piloted and subsequently fully launched in Fall 2020.



NAPRA also produced and publicly launched the following promotional video for the P4T mentorship program, featuring mentors and mentees who were part of the inaugural group of program participants as well as NAPRA staff. The video has also been made available to the public with French subtitles.



*"This is a great opportunity for us as international pharmacy graduates, because we do not have previous experience in the [Canadian] healthcare system so this mentorship program helps us get hands-on experience in a practical setting."*

— Faten (P4T mentee)

**Meet Faten, One of Our P4T Mentees**



*"[Even in Canada,] we really don't gain a lot of [practical] experience through our schooling, and that's where actually working in the pharmacy with a pharmacist is very important."*

— Tejal (P4T mentor)

**Meet Tejal, a P4T Mentor with Passion for Sharing Knowledge**



# National Drug Schedules

In Canada, **responsibility for the drug scheduling process is shared between Health Canada, NAPRA and, in certain provinces/territories, the pharmacy regulatory authorities.** The authority to approve health products (e.g., drugs, natural health products and medical devices) for sale in the country lies with Health Canada. NAPRA's role in the process begins after Health Canada has authorized a drug for sale in Canada and determined whether it requires a prescription for sale.

On behalf of its members, NAPRA administers the National Drug Schedules (NDS) program, a harmonized national drug scheduling model established with the aim of aligning the provincial/territorial drug schedules so that the conditions of sale for drugs would be more consistent across Canada. The NDS consist of three schedules or four categories of drugs as outlined on the next page.

## Managing NDS Operations

In 2020, NAPRA continued to effectively manage the ongoing operations of the NDS program. Regular updates to the NDS were completed to align with changes to the Health Canada Prescription Drug List. In addition, NAPRA engaged in a comprehensive exercise to map the NDS to the schedules of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) and its regulations, to ensure that an accurate copy of the entries in these federal schedules were included in Schedule I of the NDS for information. This makes it easier for users to find information on the prescription status of these ingredients without having to access multiple databases.





# NDSAC Reviews

The National Drug Scheduling Advisory Committee (NDSAC) completed a review of fixed-dose combinations of acetaminophen and ibuprofen in June 2020. The NDS were subsequently modified as follows:

Drug name	Comment	Schedule	Date
<b>Acetaminophen and ibuprofen</b>	When sold in oral, fixed-dose combinations, in package sizes containing 20,000 mg or less of acetaminophen and 6,000 mg or less of ibuprofen*  <i>*Note that this listing does not apply to products containing ibuprofen that would meet the criteria to be included on the Prescription Drug list, as these would require a prescription</i>	III	July 2020
<b>Acetaminophen and ibuprofen</b>	When sold in oral, fixed-dose combinations, in package sizes containing either more than 20,000 mg of acetaminophen or more than 6,000 mg of ibuprofen*  <i>*Note that this listing does not apply to products containing ibuprofen that would meet the criteria to be included on the Prescription Drug list, as these would require a prescription</i>	II	July 2020

## NAPRA National Drug Schedules

### Schedule I

Schedule I drugs require a prescription for sale.

### Schedule II

Schedule II drugs do not require a prescription for sale but are only available from the pharmacist.

### Schedule III

Schedule III drugs are available without a prescription but are to be sold from the self-selection area of the pharmacy operated under the direct supervision of the pharmacist.

### Unscheduled

Unscheduled drugs can be sold without professional supervision from any retail outlet.

[Full Outline of the Schedules](#)

# NDS Policies

The NDS were also updated in 2020 to reflect changes in NAPRA's *Policy for Natural Health Products* (NHPs).

NAPRA's NDS were developed before Health Canada began regulating the sale of NHPs in Canada and, when the *Natural Health Products Regulations* came into force in 2004, many products that were included in the NDS became re-classified as NHPs by Health Canada. Since the requirements for authorizing NHPs for sale in Canada are significantly different than for traditional non-prescription drugs and the conditions of sale of NHPs cannot be fully assessed against the NDS scheduling processes, NAPRA determined that NHPs were beyond the scope of NAPRA's NDS, but agreed to maintain the ingredients that were already listed in the NDS on an interim basis until direction could be provided regarding a framework for determining conditions of sale for NHPs in Canada.

Only NHPs that were classified as drugs prior to 2004 were ever part of the NDS. NHPs that have always existed as NHPs or new NHPs introduced into the market since 2004 were never listed on the NDS. Given that NHPs were determined to be outside the scope of the NDS and that the interim measure only addressed the risk of a small subset of NHPs while others were available to consumers without directed conditions of sale, NAPRA determined that this disparate approach was no longer in the best interest of the public. In 2019, NAPRA updated its *Policy on Natural Health Products* to remove the small subset of NHPs remaining in the NDS. This decision was meant to clarify for the public that Health Canada is responsible for ensuring the safety of NHPs available for sale in Canada and to further encourage the development of a more comprehensive framework that would better protect Canadians from the risks of all NHPs.

To allow time for stakeholders to adapt, NAPRA implemented a stepwise, risk-based approach to the removal of NHPs from the NDS:

1. Effective January 2, 2020: NHPs listed within the Unscheduled category and within Schedule III were to be removed from the NDS, with the exception of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine.
2. Effective January 2, 2022: NHPs listed within Schedule I and II were to be removed from the NDS.

*[Note: in consideration of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the substance use crisis in Canada, a decision was subsequently made in 2021 to defer the removal of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine from the NDS until January 2024.]*

In accordance with this risk-based plan, NHPs in the lowest risk categories, those listed in the Unscheduled category and in Schedule III other than ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, were removed from the NDS on January 2, 2020.

# Standards, Guidance, and Competencies



NAPRA develops and publishes model standards, competencies, and guidance documents which serve as a model that can be adopted or adapted for implementation as seen fit by the pharmacy regulatory authority in each jurisdiction of Canada, based on its specific needs.

Harmonizing competencies and practice standards using common, national documents helps to reinforce their credibility, dependability, and acceptance throughout Canada. This contributes to the delivery of quality care and is critical to help patients receive consistent, high-quality care from coast to coast.

In 2020, NAPRA continued work on the *Model Standards of Practice for Continuous Quality Improvement and Medication Incident Reporting by Pharmacy Professionals*, with the expectation of publishing them in early 2021. Further revisions were also undertaken for the *Model Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians in Canada*. Finally, work began on *Model Compounding Competencies for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technician in Canada*, completing a draft to serve as the basis for consultation in 2021.

# Stakeholder Engagement



On behalf of its members, NAPRA provides leadership on national policy issues, and acts as a national and central point of contact with the federal government and with pan-Canadian as well as international stakeholders.

Central to NAPRA's stakeholder engagement work is engaging with Health Canada and other pertinent government departments to ensure that NAPRA members' perspectives are shared on relevant issues, including formal consultation requests. In this regard, in 2020, NAPRA provided input into a variety of consultations, including the Canadian Pain Task Force consultation on ways to improve how we understand, prevent, and manage pain in Canada, the list of drugs for which samples can be provided to the public, and proposed regulatory changes related to supervised consumption sites. NAPRA engaged in federal-level conversations related to the regulation of pharmacy practice, including discussions on nitrosamine impurities in medications, commercial compounding, the distribution of human milk fortifiers, the switching of methadone products and notices of restriction. NAPRA also participated on Health Canada's Self-Care Framework Task Force, in working group discussions on matters related to Central Fill establishments, and in regular bilateral meetings on a variety of topics with the Controlled Substances Directorate and the Therapeutic Products Directorate.



Despite its challenges, the year 2020 provided NAPRA with the opportunity to further strengthen its collaboration with the federal government because, in addition to its usual types of interactions, the COVID-19 pandemic brought forward numerous challenges which required frequent and regular engagement with both Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. As previously highlighted, this included multiple exchanges related to topics such as regulatory changes to scope of practice to facilitate continuity of care, managing supply and mitigating shortages of drugs and other health products, management of controlled substances in the context of COVID-19 protocols, COVID-19 testing and vaccination, and other regulatory and practice issues affected by the pandemic.

Coordinating a community of practice for pharmacy regulatory authorities across Canada to address common issues and to share knowledge and experiences relevant to pharmacy regulation remains the cornerstone of NAPRA. As shared earlier in this report, in 2020, the importance of the alliance and the collaborative work it supports was particularly highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As soon as the pandemic was announced, NAPRA shifted its focus to supporting the pharmacy regulatory authorities however they needed as they faced the challenges brought by COVID-19. This included:

- coordination of regular virtual meetings with the pharmacy regulatory authorities to address emerging issues and to provide a venue for information sharing;
- linkages with Health Canada and other stakeholders on a range of issues as described above; and
- development and maintenance of a wide-ranging repository of information on COVID-19-related matters pertinent to the pharmacy regulatory authorities.

NAPRA continued to engage with various non-governmental stakeholders on matters of mutual interest at all levels from provincial/territorial, to pan-Canadian, to international. These included: NAPRA's partnership in the NABP's .Pharmacy Verified Websites Program which serves to identify safe and legitimate online pharmacies and online sources of pharmacy information; organizing and participating as a presenter at the International Pharmaceutical Federation's FIP Forum for Pharmacy Regulators held virtually in 2020; and engaging with ASOP Canada, the Canadian branch of the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies on pertinent issues such as the U.S. importation of drugs from Canada. NAPRA also held consultations with immigrant services organizations in relation to its work with international pharmacy graduates. As with the federal government, the year 2020 resulted in enhanced collaboration with many different stakeholders, as the urgency and importance of pandemic-related issues necessitated more frequent engagement with a wide variety of different organizations in order to work together to deal with the constantly evolving challenges that COVID-19 presented.

*Some of the stakeholders with whom NAPRA engages on behalf of its members include:*

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Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP)

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Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada

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Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management

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Canadian Association of Pharmacy Students and Interns

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Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians

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Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs

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Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators

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Canadian Council on Continuing Education in Pharmacy

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Canada Health Infoway

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Canadian Mental Health Association

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Canadian Network of Agencies of Regulation

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Canadian Pharmacists Association

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Canadian Pharmacy Technician Educators Association

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Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists

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Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation

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Federal government departments and agencies

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Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada

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Food, Health and Consumer Products of Canada

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Healthcare Excellence Canada

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Health Products Stewardship Association

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Immigrant services organizations

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Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada

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International Pharmaceutical Federation

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National Association of Boards of Pharmacy

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Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada

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Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada

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Public / Patients

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National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities<sup>®</sup>  
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