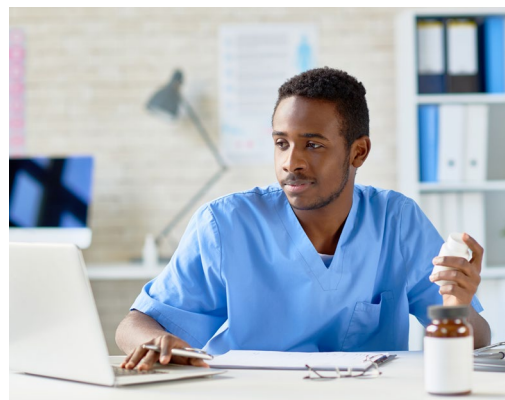


Pharmaceuticals Product Review, 2022



The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) is committed to ensuring that its long-standing products, including its data sets, indicators and reports, continue to resonate with stakeholders and reflect the evolving Canadian health care landscape.

In early 2022, CIHI completed its third product review — a review of its Pharmaceuticals product (the Pharma product). The Pharma product comprises 2 main public releases ([Prescribed drug spending in Canada](#) and [Drug use among seniors in Canada](#)) and a health indicator ([Potentially Inappropriate Medication Prescribed to Seniors](#)). The Pharma product provides essential pan-Canadian information on drug utilization and cost trends to federal, provincial and territorial ministries or departments of health and the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB) while accommodating the needs of additional audiences.

The review followed a rigorous methodology and resulted in a number of key findings, accompanied by a detailed implementation plan.

Process of the product review

Guided by an external reference group, the product review consisted of informant interviews, an online stakeholder questionnaire, an international scan and reviews of key user metrics (e.g., the product's digital analytics and citations). Pan-Canadian representation was included in the feedback with a balance between government stakeholders, including federal, provincial and territorial ministries or departments of health, the PMPRB and non-government stakeholders (i.e., other pan-Canadian health organizations, professional associations, research networks, academics and/or researchers, clinicians and/or prescribers, and private sector and patient partners).

Key findings

The product review affirmed the value of CIHI's pharmaceuticals information. Stakeholders value CIHI's pan-Canadian comparisons across jurisdictions, its analysis of trends over time and its summary of provincial and territorial drug plan variations. CIHI is viewed as a trusted and respected source of drug information.

Based on stakeholder feedback, a number of recommendations were developed, centred around driving improvements in CIHI's reporting as well as the completeness, accessibility and timeliness of its pharmaceuticals data to ensure the Pharma product continues to be relevant in the evolving Canadian pharmaceuticals landscape:

- Continue to increase claims data coverage and investigate options to increase its scope to ultimately capture data on “all drugs/all people.”
- Develop de-identified standard linked data files to facilitate analyses of aggregated patient outcomes and experiences (all data).
- Improve user access to de-identified drug data (e.g., data tables, data requests) and develop a stakeholder communication strategy.
- Enhance the utility and user experience of jurisdictional drug data, plans and formulary information.
- Enhance pan-Canadian public reporting by using more detailed therapeutic and drug categories, ensuring a balanced focus between high-cost drugs and other drugs, and including more socio-demographic characteristics to allow for better reporting on equity of access.
- Release shorter analyses that inform key policy issues (e.g., access, affordability, appropriateness), integrating pharmaceuticals information with other CIHI releases and/or those of other organizations where appropriate.
- Enhance timeliness of data through the automation of data submission and reporting as well as through forecasting.

Implementation plan

Taking into account stakeholder priority needs, and the time and investment required to implement the recommendations, CIHI has proposed a phased implementation plan for the recommendations over the next few years.

Activities to enhance the Pharma product are already underway. For example, the November 2021 release of Prescribed drug spending in Canada discontinued the static narrative (i.e., PDF) report and offered enhanced data tables with improved equity reporting. Improvements in the coming years will include expanding pharmaceuticals claims data and enhancing reporting with further socio-demographic information, ensuring that public releases inform key pharmaceuticals policy issues, and integrating pharmaceuticals analysis with other CIHI analyses and/or those of other organizations.

Results of the Pharma product review will also inform the development and implementation of a longer-term CIHI strategy on drug information. The review's recommendations, action plan and summary of broader strategic actions provide a strong basis for the future development and implementation of CIHI's strategy for pharmaceuticals data and information.

What's next

The next CIHI product slated for review relates to health system inputs and characteristics (hospital spending and utilization information). Details will be shared as they become available.



For more information on the Pharma product review or to request the complete Pharma product review report (English only), please email productreview@cihi.ca

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