

Canadian consumers benefit from competition in pharmacy sector

Toronto, November 25, 2008 - Canadian consumers, taxpayers and businesses are already benefiting from competition in the generic drug manufacturing and pharmacy sectors, according to the Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores (CACDS).

A number of recent independent Canadian studies have highlighted the gap that exists between the average cost per prescription dispensed and the current dispensing fees paid to pharmacies. Manufacturer allowances to pharmacies subsidize the cost of these dispensing services and allow pharmacists to provide other professional services such as chronic disease management, counseling on natural health products and over-the-counter medicines, health promotion and education clinics. These innovative services also help keep the marketplace competitive and promote consumer choice.

In response to today's Competition Bureau study on competition in the generic drug sector, Nadine Saby, President and Chief Executive Officer of CACDS said, "It is well recognized that the current funding model for community pharmacy needs to be modernized. At present it relies too heavily on drug company allowances to significantly subsidize the provision of pharmacy services to patients even though public and private health plans benefit from this subsidization."

CACDS is working closely with pharmacist professional organizations and provincial governments to develop a better framework and fair funding for the future that will benefit Canadians and improve the health care system upon which they rely.

Community pharmacies provide Canadians with accessible, high quality, and cost-effective professional care that improves their health and wellbeing, saves lives and reduces the strain on the rest of the health care system. Canadians trust and value their community pharmacists who are medication experts and the most accessible of all health care providers.

About CACDS

CACDS is the national voice of community pharmacy in Canada. The members of CACDS are traditional chain and banner drug stores, grocery chains and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. CACDS members represent approximately 6,000 pharmacies that dispense about 78 per cent of the nation's prescriptions each year. CACDS members employ more than 100,000 Canadians, including 80 per cent of the pharmacists practising in communities across Canada.

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