



June 14, 2011

### **Safer medication use highlighted during Seniors' Month**

*Website aims to combat adverse drug effects in older persons*

**Toronto, Canada** - Adverse reactions to prescription drugs among older persons is a growing concern. To mark Seniors' Month this June, a group of organizations involved in seniors' care has launched a website to give healthcare workers advice about avoiding this serious problem. The site includes a list of potentially harmful medications along with safer alternatives, links to resources and background information.

"Some medications may cause harm in an older person and should be avoided or used cautiously with monitoring," said Dr Andrea Moser, current president of the Ontario Long Term Care Physicians. "Our ultimate goal is to see medication use in older persons achieve the desired therapeutic effect with fewer adverse effects."

"Pharmacists are keenly aware of the potentially dangerous effects medications can have on older patients. It's essential that we identify high-risk medications, monitor them and provide alternatives as required," added Janet McCutcheon, Chair of the Ontario Pharmacists' Association.

The Safe Medication Use in Older Persons Information Page was created by a group of physicians, pharmacists, nurses and others with expertise in seniors care. It is hosted on the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada website ([www.ismp-canada.org/beers\\_list](http://www.ismp-canada.org/beers_list)).

"Medications can save lives and improve quality of life, but they can also come with side-effects. Awareness among healthcare providers of medications that are poorly tolerated by elderly people can go a long way toward preventing adverse drug events" said Dr. Ben Chan, President and Chief Executive Officer, Health Quality Ontario.

The webpage is part of an awareness campaign designed to provide care team members in long-term care homes, hospitals and the community with information on medications that are poorly tolerated by older persons. The content of the site will be updated as new information becomes available.

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**About the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada (ISMP Canada)**

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada (ISMP Canada) is an independent national not-for-profit agency committed to the advancement of medication safety in all health care settings. ISMP Canada works collaboratively with the health care community, regulatory agencies and policy makers, provincial, national, and international patient safety organizations, the pharmaceutical industry, and the public to promote safe medication practices. ISMP Canada's mandate includes receiving and analyzing medication incident and near-miss reports, identifying contributing factors and causes and making recommendations for the prevention of harmful medication incidents.

[www.ismp-canada.org](http://www.ismp-canada.org)