

Canada's leading health care organizations launch new app and electronic initiative to promote the safe and smart use of medicines

Ottawa, Ontario – June 20, 2012 –Seven of Canada's leading health care organizations have joined together to launch new electronic tools to help Canadians use their medications safely and appropriately.

The tools are the latest innovation in the *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* (KiBM) program which was created by Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D) in 1994 to help Canadians better manage their own health care. They include a free new iPhone and iPad app, **MyMedRec**, and website www.knowledgeisthebestmedicine.org which have been developed by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada with input from Canadian patient groups and health care provider organizations.

The new electronic record is aimed at empowering the growing number of smart phone owners who use mobile devices to manage a wide range of personal data, including their medication information.

"As someone who relies on multiple medications on a daily basis, I find that this App is an excellent tool for managing my medications in a safe and smart way," said Maureen Smith, a patient living with a chronic illness. "It complements the work of my health professionals and is easily adaptable. It puts the power of knowledge in the hands of the patient."

Studies have shown that responsible and appropriate use of medicines leads to better health outcomes and health care costs like hospitalization are greatly reduced. The World Health Organization has established safe medication use as a priority given that an estimated 50 per cent of patients do not take their medications correctly.

Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D), the Canadian Nurses Association, the Canadian Pharmacists Association, the Canadian Medical Association, the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada, the Victorian Order of Nurses and the Best Medicines Coalition have joined together to support development of the iPhone and iPad app.

MyMedRec allows patients and caregivers to have their medication and immunization record at their fingertips. It includes features such as refill and dose reminders, storing of medication histories and, multiple patient profiles, email and picture capabilities, as well as contact information of prescribers and pharmacies.



The tool will help patients and caregivers compile a full list of their medications whether prescription, over the counter or natural health products and share the information with their health care team as they see fit. The app is also supported by the www.knowledgeisthebestmedicine.org website which contains health information, relevant links and safe medication use tips, as well as a variety of downloadable medication records for those who don't have iPhones.

The tools are the next generation of the *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* program that has been utilized by millions of Canadians for nearly two decades in collaboration with hundreds of health provider organizations, governments, hospitals, health units, doctors, nurses, pharmacists and patient groups.

Partner Quotes

"Our industry created the *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* program in 1994 to ensure the safe and responsible use of medicines. Our commitment to patient-focussed care is as strong as ever and we are pleased to join with our health partners to provide these new and innovative tools for Canadians." - **Russell Williams, President of Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies**

"A full understanding of all aspects of medications, including safety issues, is so important to helping patients manage their health. *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* offers useful information along with convenient and user-friendly monitoring tools." - **Gail Attara, Chair, Best Medicines Coalition**

"ISMP Canada is very pleased to be engaged in the collaborative development of the *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* electronic medication record tools. We see these tools as an excellent way to promote the safe use of medications to even more Canadians and to further advance medication reconciliation across Canada, which addresses a huge gap in medication safety." - **David U, CEO of ISMP Canada**

"For a pharmacist, having an accurate record of the medications a patient is taking is critical to providing the best possible care. This app and these tools will be very valuable for pharmacists, especially when doing medication reviews with patients." - **Janet Cooper, Senior Director, Professional and Membership Affairs, Canadian Pharmacists Association**



“The innovative tool developed by the KiBM partners empowers patients by allowing them to have the information they need about their own health care right at their fingertips. The CMA is proud to continue its longstanding participation in *the Knowledge is the Best Medicine* program, which is doing its part in putting the concept of patient-centred care into practice for the benefit of Canadians.” - **Dr. John Haggie, President of the Canadian Medical Association**

“Registered nurses recognize the importance of Canadians being involved in their own health care as much as possible. CNA is pleased to partner with the *Knowledge is the Best Medicine* program as it provides resources to support and promote effective self-care, including self-management of medications.” - **Rachel Bard, CEO, Canadian Nurses Association**

“VON Canada is highly committed to improving client outcomes, including those related to medication safety. This innovative MedRec tool will provide Canadians a greater ability to proactively deal with their own health by encouraging their active involvement in managing their medications.” - **Catherine Butler, Senior Director of Practice, VON Canada**

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