



Canadian Patient Safety Institute  
Institut canadien pour la sécurité des patients



Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada  
Institut pour l'utilisation sécuritaire des médicaments du Canada

## News Release

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October 28, 2013

### Medications Can Be Confusing

*Patients are encouraged to keep a list of medications to share with healthcare providers.*

**Edmonton, Canada** —With so many medications prescribed every year, there is no denying that administering and taking medications can be confusing and overwhelming. The Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) is collaborating with the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada (ISMP Canada), to get the medication safety message out for all patients to keep a list of their medications. Patients can help to stay safe by carrying an up-to-date list of all their medications, including over the counter products. Having accurate information at their fingertips will relay important health information in the event of an emergency or when transitioning through the healthcare system.

There are three key pieces to medication safety: keeping a list of medications, reporting medication errors when they do occur, and the use of bar coding across the healthcare system.” says Hugh MacLeod, CEO of the Canadian Patient Safety Institute.

If a medication error occurs, patients are encouraged to report this error in order to prevent it from happening again. Reporting is everyone’s responsibility. The Canadian Medication Incident Reporting and Prevention System (CMIRPS) is a collaborative program with a goal to reduce and prevent harmful medication incidents in Canada. CMIRPS is a voluntary confidential program that collects, analyzes and distributes information on medication incidents.

Another initiative working to increase medication safety is the Canadian Pharmaceutical Bar Coding Project which has launched a new resource to guide healthcare leaders on bar coding systems. “These systems will help keep patients safer by reducing the occurrence of medication errors and improve the accuracy of health records,” says David U, President and CEO of ISMP Canada.

Medication errors are one of the leading causes of patient harm in healthcare, and most of these can be prevented. From October 28<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 it will be hard to miss the Canadian Patient Safety Week posters and promotional materials spreading the message of safe medication use on the walls of health facilities across the country. With a focus on medication safety, the campaign aims to encourage patients to keep a list of their medications.

For more information please visit [www.asklistentalk.ca](http://www.asklistentalk.ca).



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**For media inquiries about Canadian Patient Safety Week or Canada's Virtual Forum on Patient Safety and Quality Improvement , please contact:**

Cecilia Bloxom, Director of Communications, (780) 700-8642 [CBloxom@cpsi-icsp.ca](mailto:CBloxom@cpsi-icsp.ca)

Canadian Patient Safety Institute

### **About Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI)**

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) is an independent not-for-profit organization that exists to raise awareness and facilitate implementation of ideas and best practices to achieve a transformation in patient safety. Funded by Health Canada, CPSI reflects the desire to close the gap between the healthcare we have and the healthcare we deserve.

[www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca](http://www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca)

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

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada is an independent national not-for-profit organization committed to the advancement of medication safety in all healthcare settings. ISMP Canada is key partner in the Canadian Medication Incident Reporting and Prevention System (CMIRPS), a program funded by Health Canada. ISMP Canada's mandate includes analyzing medication incidents, making recommendations for the prevention of harmful medication incidents, and facilitating quality improvement initiatives. ISMP Canada works collaboratively with the healthcare community, regulatory agencies and policy makers, provincial, national and international patient safety organizations, the pharmaceutical industry and the public to promote safe medication practices. [www.ismp-canada.org](http://www.ismp-canada.org) and

[www.SafeMedicationUse.ca](http://www.SafeMedicationUse.ca)