

From: The HIROC Connection – Issue # 26, FALL 2010

## › ISMP Canada Bar Coding Project

# A HIROC Contribution Goes a Long Way

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The Canadian Pharmaceutical Bar Coding Project is a joint effort aimed at increasing patient safety in Canada. A variety of stakeholders in the healthcare sector are collaborating to implement standardized bar codes on all aspects of pharmaceutical labelling. The primary objective is to establish a transparent medication flow chain, ensuring problems do not occur from pharmaceutical manufacturers to the patient. By doing so, a new benchmark in both patient safety and supply chain accuracy and efficiency may be realized.

The Project was spearheaded by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada (ISMP Canada) and the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) and has evolved into a multi-phase project guided by a national implementation committee. HIROC is proud to be a sponsor of this project, **“We see ISMP Canada as a key partner in helping us move towards our vision of creating the safest healthcare system,” says HIROC CEO Peter Flattery.**

This project will directly impact medication safety through the many safeguards currently being planned for sector-wide implementation. For example, with a point-of-care scanning system, healthcare professionals will be better equipped to ensure the right drug and dose are being given to the right patient. Moreover, scanning may also be seen as a valuable tool in creating greater efficiencies in patient identification, verification of medication dispensing and medical record keeping. The ultimate goal of the project is widespread utilization of this technology adding another layer of safety to our healthcare system.

The Canadian Pharmaceutical Bar Coding Project received the 2010 Way-Paver Award from the TerraPharma Project in the U.S.A. The Award was established in 2006 to acknowledge the exceptional



contributions of organizations and individuals that have helped to create a safer point-of-care technology with the utilization of bar codes and a steadfast commitment to patient safety. This is the first time the award has been given to an initiative outside of the U.S.A.

“In accepting the award at the recent unSUMMIT Conference, we acknowledged all of the participating organizations that share in this award, and also the efforts that have been made to set aside competing interests in order to create synergy for this important healthcare safety initiative. We also took the time to express our appreciation to our U.S.A. colleagues for graciously sharing with us their bar coding implementation experiences and learning,” says Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Sylvia Hyland of ISMP Canada.

The Bar Coding Project is entering the final phase and is focusing on maintaining national support and outlining preferred practices regarding product labelling, assessing implementation needs and defining best practices. Health Canada has also expressed interest in collaborating in future discussions.

**For more information about this project, please visit the website [www.ismp-canada.org](http://www.ismp-canada.org).**