

# 5 Questions to Ask About Your Medications

Watt, A.<sup>1</sup>; Sever, L.<sup>1</sup>; Hyland, S.<sup>1</sup>; Herold, D.<sup>2</sup>; Hughes, L.<sup>2</sup>; Murray, M.<sup>2</sup>; Cass, M.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute for Safe Medication Practices (Canada), Toronto, Ontario. <sup>2</sup>Patients for Patient Safety Canada, Edmonton, Alberta. <sup>3</sup>Canadian Patient Safety Institute, Edmonton, Alberta.

## BACKGROUND

Patients are the constant in every transition of care and can be at high risk of adverse drug events, particularly at discharge from hospital to home. Knowing the questions to ask will empower patients to be an active partner in their health and can help to mitigate risk of harm from medications.

## OBJECTIVES

The project objective was to develop, test, evaluate and disseminate a national medication safety ‘checklist’ for use by patients and healthcare providers.

## METHODS

The development and dissemination of the campaign was achieved by:

- Conducting an environmental scan of best practices, tools and evidence and forming an advisory group of patients and representatives
- Co-designing and testing the list of questions with patients and obtained external stakeholder feedback through an online survey
- Creating the ‘5 Questions’ through PDSA cycles and small tests of change.



## 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS when you see your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

### 1. CHANGES?

Have any medications been added, stopped or changed, and why?

### 2. CONTINUE?

What medications do I need to keep taking, and why?

### 3. PROPER USE?

How do I take my medications, and for how long?

### 4. MONITOR?

How will I know if my medication is working, and what side effects do I watch for?

### 5. FOLLOW-UP?

Do I need any tests and when do I book my next visit?

Keep your medication record up to date.

Remember to include:

- ✓ drug allergies
- ✓ vitamins and minerals
- ✓ herbal/natural products
- ✓ all medications including non-prescription products

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to review all your medications to see if any can be stopped or reduced.

Visit [safemedicationuse.ca](http://safemedicationuse.ca) for more information.

## RESULTS

A national online survey of patients and healthcare providers (n=291):

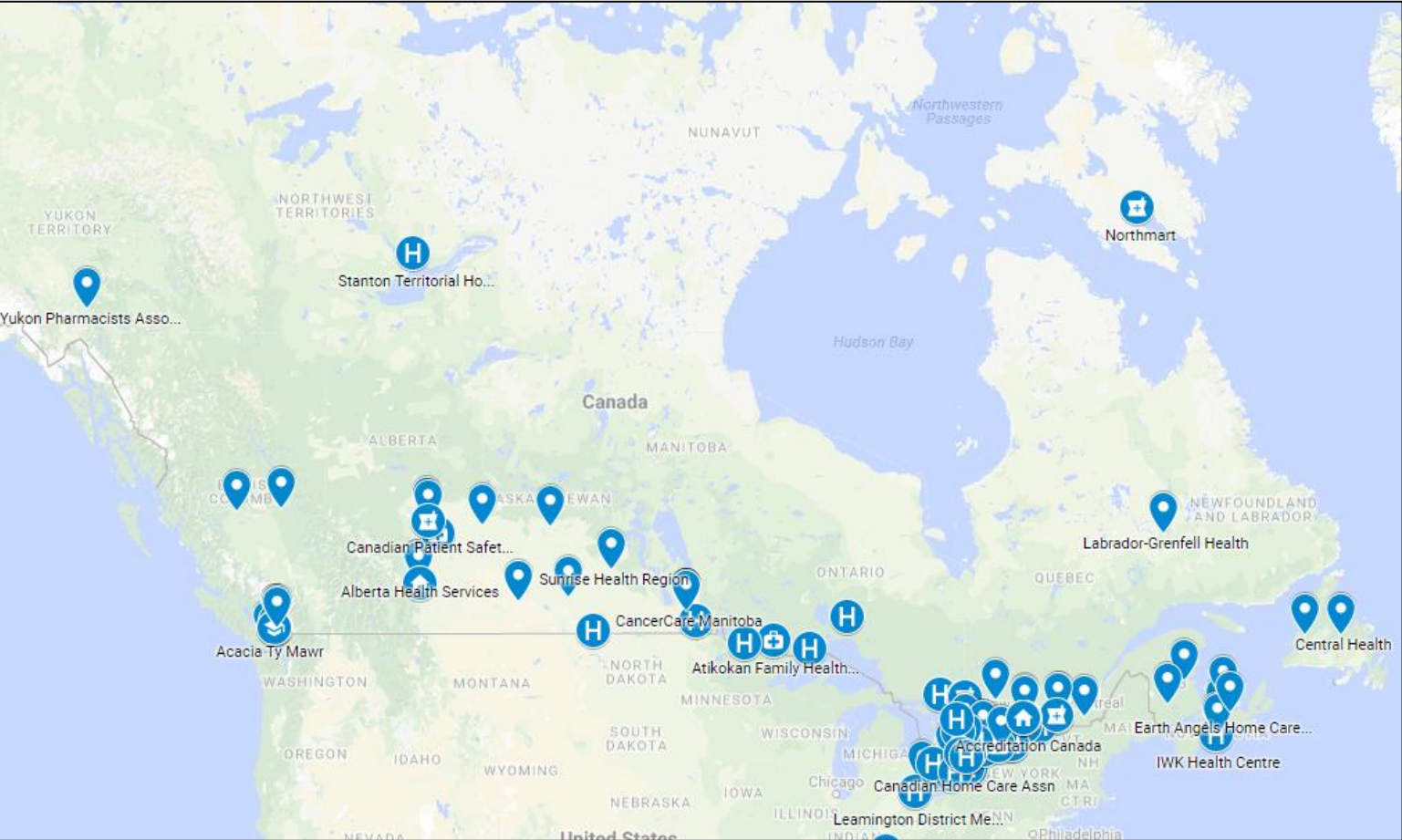
**85%** of patients would feel comfortable asking their healthcare provider the ‘5 Questions’.

**75%** of patients responded that the answers to these ‘5 Questions’ would be very useful to help them understand their medications.

**84%** of healthcare providers would be willing to answer their patient’s ‘5 Questions’.

## RESULTS (cont.)

Over **150** Canadian organizations, at local, provincial and national levels have formally endorsed ‘5 Questions’ and implemented programs to increase reach and dissemination.



## CONCLUSIONS

The ‘5 Questions’ with visible organization endorsements and translation in 22 languages has demonstrated a shared interest in empowering patients.

These questions may be a useful counselling framework or teach-back tool to help hospital pharmacists communicate more effectively with patients so they can better understand how to safely use their medications before they leave the hospital.

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### Disclosures

Authors of this poster have nothing to disclose concerning possible personal or financial relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation.