



April 30, 2020

The Honourable Doug Ford, MPP  
Premier of Ontario

Room 281, Mail Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1  
Email: [doug.fordco@pc.ola.org](mailto:doug.fordco@pc.ola.org)

The Honourable Christine Elliott, MPP  
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

Email: [christine.elliott@pc.ola.org](mailto:christine.elliott@pc.ola.org)

**RE: Recognition of Hospital Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians, as frontline workers eligible for pandemic pay during COVID-19**

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Dear Premier Ford and Deputy Premier Elliott;

The Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists Ontario Branch (CSHP OB) appreciates the efforts of the Ontario government and its commitment to supporting frontline healthcare workers in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

All hospital pharmacy professionals are working around the clock, tirelessly on the frontlines to ensure patients' medication needs are safely met. However, it was disheartening to see in the April 29th news release that Hospital Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians were not amongst the expanded list of essential workers eligible to receive pandemic pay support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hospital Pharmacists' and Pharmacy Technicians' primary concern is not the financial compensation, but rather the Government of Ontario's lack of recognition for their contributions as essential frontline healthcare workers.

Modern hospital pharmacy has changed. It is more than counting pills behind counters. Hospital pharmacy is a clinical, patient-facing practice that takes place in intensive care units, outpatient clinics, hospital wards, emergency departments and also in the dispensary. Interaction with patients, their families and the health care teams is essential to patient-centered care.

**This is especially true in the midst of a pandemic and consequent drug shortages.**

Hospital pharmacy staff are working above and beyond to ensure patient and medication safety by:

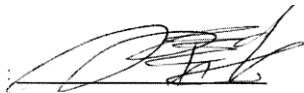
- Participating in bedside rounds with the ICU team to advise on the optimal medications, ensuring correct medication dosing, managing drug-drug interactions, side effects & suggesting alternative medications where there are critical drug shortages
- Educating patients and families about their medications

- Developing COVID-19 management protocols for treating patients
- Advising on alternative routes of administration when there are infusion pumps shortages
- Programming infusion pumps to support safe medication administration
- Developing COVID-19 research protocols
- Preparing emergency medication kits to intubate COVID-19 patients
- Preparing code blue (Cardiac Arrest) medication kits
- Implementing conservation strategies such as increasing compounding and preparation of smaller aliquots of critical care medications
- Changing medication schedules to reduce nurses' exposure to COVID-19
- Supporting safe discharge of patients due to the increase of virtual care models
- Maintaining the hospital medication inventory
- Ensuring sufficient medication supply to support the opening of field hospitals to support more ICU beds
- Providing access to all essential medications.

The Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists Ontario Branch is asking the Ontario government to recognize Hospital Pharmacists, Pharmacy Technicians and hospital pharmacy staff as essential frontline healthcare workers in this fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and include them in the list of those eligible for pandemic pay.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 647-462-4917.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Yau', written over a horizontal line.

Samantha Yau RPh, BScPhm, ACPR, PharmD, BCGP  
President, CSHP Ontario Branch