



Pharmacists as immunizers

A research project evaluating the effectiveness and uptake of influenza vaccination in pharmacies, a service community pharmacists have provided to their patients since 2012

Known as OPEN, the Ontario Pharmacy Research Collaboration is a \$5.77 million multi-institutional and interdisciplinary research program comprised of a number of projects that are examining the quality, outcomes and value of new and emerging medication management services that pharmacists and other healthcare professionals provide.

Pharmacist as immunizers

OPEN's Pharmacists as immunizers project is investigating the impact of provincial legislation that has permitted Ontario's pharmacists to administer the flu vaccine since 2012. The immunization project is conducting a number of studies to answer these questions —

- What has been the uptake of community pharmacist-administered influenza vaccinations in Ontario?
- What has been the impact of community pharmacist-administered vaccinations on the overall Ontario influenza vaccination rate?
- What are the characteristics of patients who have chosen to receive their influenza vaccination from a community pharmacist?
- Do community pharmacists and their patients support the expansion of Ontario community pharmacists' immunization authority beyond the influenza vaccine?
- What is the immunization authority of pharmacists and pharmacy students in other jurisdictions?

Opportunities for students

Undergraduate and graduate students on OPEN's projects are provided with individual and collaborative experiential and applied-learning opportunities to develop and enhance their training and research skills.

Student training focuses on pharmacy practice and health service research knowledge and skills. Importantly, students learn from and network with other researchers, their peers and knowledge users, strengthening research rigour as findings are put into practice. Students work with project members, conducting research, including compiling information on vaccinations, performing literature reviews, and giving oral and poster conference presentations.

Research based, knowledge-user driven

The project has strong ties to its knowledge users — individuals from partner organizations including the Ontario Pharmacists Association, Ontario College of Pharmacists, Canadian Pharmacists Association, and Shoppers Drug Mart.

Project results will be applied to improve pharmacy practice, the effectiveness of services pharmacists provide to their patients, and the quality of healthcare in Ontario.

Project researchers

Project leads: Drs. Nancy Waite and Sherilyn Houle, University of Waterloo

Project members: Drs. Wasem Alsabbagh, Dana Church, Emily Milne and Richard Violette, University of Waterloo

Drs. Suzanne Cadarette, Nedzad Pojskic and Lalitha Raman-Wilms, University of Toronto

Dr. Jeff Kwong, Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences

John Papastergiou, Shoppers Drug Mart

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Would you like to learn more?

If you'd like more information about this project, please contact **Dana Church**, PhD, research coordinator of the Pharmacists as immunizers project.

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You can also visit open-pharmacy-research.ca/research-projects/existing-services/pharmacists-as-immunizers

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