



CANADIAN DOCTORS | MÉDECINS CANADIENS
FOR MEDICARE | POUR LE RÉGIME PUBLIC

Submission (Addendum) to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology

Bill C-64, An Act Respecting Pharmacare

October 2024

October 1, 2024

Canadian Doctors for Medicare (CDM) is a nationwide, evidence-based, and non-partisan member organization comprised of physicians and medical students dedicated to strengthening and preserving Canada's publicly-funded health care system.

This letter serves as an addendum to our September 2024 submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology.

The CDM Board of Directors welcomes the recent clarifying letter from Minister Holland to Senator Omidvar, stipulating that "Under this program, the cost of these medications will be paid for and administered through the public plan, rather than through a mix of public and private payers".¹

CDM believes that a successful pharmacare program must include public administration and exclusive public funding that covers the entire cost of the medication (drug cost plus dispensing fee). A truly publicly-funded, single-payer system allows for greater reductions in the cost of medication through bulk purchasing and reduced administrative costs.² Incremental or "fill-the-gaps" models will have limited financial and population benefits.³ Publicly-funded drug plans also incentivize governments to develop programs to improve drug prescribing and usage to help ensure that public money is being well spent.⁴

CDM reaffirms our strong support for the urgent passage of Bill C-64 with the understanding that it will result in a truly universal, single-payer, publicly administered, and exclusively publicly-funded program for coverage of contraceptives and diabetes medications, and that the program will expand to cover additional classes of essential medications as soon as practicable.

On behalf of our patients and colleagues, we thank-you for taking these key steps towards a truly transformative vision for our health care system.

¹ <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-pharmacare-bill-would-see-medications-paid-for-administered-through/>

² Morgan SG, Law M, Daw JR, Abraham L, Martin D. Estimated cost of universal public coverage of prescription drugs in Canada. CMAJ 2015;187(7):491-497. <https://www.cmaj.ca/content/187/7/491>

³ https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/canadians-deserve-better-than-fake-pharmacare/article_9aec930-b7f8-50d5-b798-085bc7b6bbfa.html

⁴ Weekes LM, Blogg S, Jackson S, Hosking K. NPS MedicineWise: 20 years of change. Journal of Pharmaceutical Policy and Practice 2018;11:19. <https://joppp.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40545-018-0145-y#Sec12>

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