



Community Pharmacists  
Advancing **Safety**  
in Saskatchewan

# [directions]

## REPORT FROM THE FIELD ON OUR COMPASS PROGRAM

VOLUME TWO / ISSUE ONE

AUGUST 2016

“The biggest benefit [is that using COMPASS] opens a conversation and discussion on errors and provides a learning opportunity. It makes people aware that mistakes do happen, and it is valuable to discuss them, rather than tucking it away.”

—this comment and others taken from the recent COMPASS™ surveys

### **Survey Results**

Beginning February 2016, surveys were sent to all COMPASS™ Phase II pharmacists to assess the changes that have occurred in Saskatchewan community pharmacies through the use of the COMPASS™ quality improvement program.

Todd Boyle of St. Xavier University in Nova Scotia has recently completed compiling the results of the survey (final report of the survey results can be found [here](#)). The findings supported the widespread implementation of COMPASS™ in all Saskatchewan community pharmacies.

### **Recommendations**

Rollout the COMPASS™ quality improvement program to all community pharmacies in Saskatchewan.

Develop a strategy to better engage community pharmacy staff in the formal tools and techniques of COMPASS™.

Explore and widely communicate batched or hybrid forms of medication incident reporting.

Although many of the report's recommendations were related to developing strategies to increase the engagement of the pharmacy staff in using the tools, there was also strong evidence of a shift in culture within these pharmacies. For example, there were improvements in working conditions, a focus on safety within the pharmacy, a decrease in the blame culture and a more positive outlook on organizational learning.

**“Making safety a higher priority than it was previously. Taking blame away from individuals and highlighting the types of errors we make most commonly instead.”**

Therefore it is important that all COMPASS™ pharmacies regularly use the tools and become comfortable with them prior to widespread implementation.

## ***Statistics***

Our statistical reports provide us with numerical evidence of the value of the COMPASS™ program. These numbers are directly derived from the input provided by our pilot pharmacies. We would not have this valuable information without your diligence and cooperation.

The following are the statistics for incident reporting in the CPhIR (Community Pharmacy Incident Reporting) system. The report covers all data entered starting from Phase I in September 2013, until the end of July 2016.

To date, there have been **6,301** incidents reported to the CPhIR system.

A breakdown of the top three incidents include:

- 1,556** incidents with an incorrect dose/frequency
- 1,194** incidents where the incorrect quantity was dispensed
- 920** incidents that involved an incorrect drug

Of the total incidents (6,301):

- 5,159** had an outcome of NO ERROR (intercepted BEFORE they reached the patient)
- 1,076** were NO HARM (incidents reached the patient, but did not cause harm)
- 64** incidents did result in HARM. Information from ISMP Canada indicated that
  - 58 were MILD harm
  - 8 were MODERATE harm

Up to the end of July 2016, 94 pharmacies have entered at least one incident into the CPhIR system and 69 pharmacies have either completed or have started their online data entries for the MSSA. Eighty-six pharmacies have held at least one quarterly meeting.

## **Reminders and Deadlines**

### **Reminders**

If your pharmacy has yet to record an incident or complete the MSSA, please begin to do so now. To fully understand the tools and successfully implement them into your pharmacy's everyday workflow, they need to be used consistently. As well, the information your pharmacy gleans from these processes will help to make your systems and processes safer for patients.



The ISMP Canada's Medication Safety Self-Assessment (MSSA) tool is one of the key components of COMPASS™. It is meant to provide ongoing, proactive self-assessment of both the safety culture of the pharmacy and the safety of its medication system. COMPASS™ pharmacies that completed an MSSA in Phase II should by now have either completed their second MSSA or be in the process of completing it. This second MSSA can be used as a comparison to show improvements since the completion of the first MSSA.

**“The ‘process’ of conducting the MSSA was the most valuable tool in the COMPASS project. It allowed us to lend thought to the store layout etc. to try and develop better flow/less risk of incidents.”**

### **Deadlines**

Please schedule and hold your next quarterly meeting.

## **What to Report to CPhIR**

Knowing which incidents to report to CPhIR can be quite a challenge. The survey results showed that many pharmacies were unsure about what should be reported and what could be left out.

There needs to be a balance between ensuring there is sufficient documentation of important incidents and the time that can be devoted to reporting in an already busy pharmacy practice. When COMPASS™ first started, SCPP encouraged pharmacies to report as many near misses and actual incidents that reach the patient as possible. SCPP wanted pharmacy staff members to become accustomed to reporting and also to be aware of the type and number of incidents happening in the pharmacy so appropriate

changes could be made to resolve and prevent them. Reporting near misses can also represent excellent learning opportunities and may be less stressful to discuss than actual errors that reach the patient. However, some COMPASS™ pharmacies are indicating they are overwhelmed with the amount of reporting they feel they need to do and are consequently falling behind.

### **New Pharmacies**

For new pharmacies that have joined COMPASS™ for Phase III, reporting most near misses **and** actual incidents that reach the patient can help to incorporate reporting into the workflow and increase awareness of the number of incidents that are occurring.

### **Experienced Pharmacies**

For pharmacies that have participated in COMPASS™ a little longer, due to increased experience with reporting and assessing incidents, it is possible they can now start to be more selective with which incidents and near misses get reported. For example, it may not be necessary to report all near misses that occur as a result of labelling errors, unless it is of sufficient significance to require action and follow-up.

With increased experience, eventually pharmacy staff members should be able to determine which incidents need to be reported and which will not add much to the continuous quality improvement process within the pharmacy.

### **Increased Reporting Options**

One option to ensure incidents are getting reported is to implement a system that is a combination between a manual and online system. Details of the incident can be manually documented on a standardized form, placed into a basket and then entered online in batches during a quiet period. Pharmacy staff are encouraged to explore different processes that enable them to report incidents in a timely manner.

### **Reporting Assistance**

Finally, if COMPASS™ pharmacy staff are struggling with what to report or need help on possible processes that might make reporting easier, guidance can be provided by the Jeannette at the SCPP office (contact information provided below).



## ***Staff Training***

Four webinar sessions were held in March and April of this year to teach new pilot pharmacies about COMPASS™ and how to use the tools. The sessions also provided a refresher for existing COMPASS™ pharmacy staff.



One of these sessions was recorded and is now available on YouTube ([https://youtu.be/9MyY2\\_BKH9E](https://youtu.be/9MyY2_BKH9E)).

COMPASS™ pharmacies are encouraged to review this YouTube video with new pharmacy staff as a way of training them on the COMPASS™ tools and process, or as a refresher for those already trained. A copy of the slides used in the presentation is available through the SCPP office by contacting [info@saskpharm.ca](mailto:info@saskpharm.ca) or 306-584-2292. The program has been approved

for 1.5 Continuing Education Units by the Continuing Professional Development for Pharmacy Professionals (CPDPP), College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, University of Saskatchewan.

## ***Shared Learning Opportunities***

One of the goals of COMPASS™ is to promote shared learning between Saskatchewan pharmacies regarding incidents, unsafe practices and other important issues in order to improve pharmacy care in Saskatchewan. One way to promote shared learning would be to highlight how a COMPASS™ pharmacy has developed an innovative or unique way to implement COMPASS™ in their pharmacy. If you think your pharmacy has developed an inventive or distinctive way of implementing COMPASS™ that might be helpful for other COMPASS™ pharmacies, please provide your tips to the SCPP office. Tips will be shared via the Directions newsletter. There may also be an incentive or reward for the pharmacy, so start sending your tips in now!

Another opportunity for shared learning is to report an interesting incident/error that occurred within your pharmacy. If you have had an incident that you feel would be a good learning opportunity for other Saskatchewan pharmacies, please forward it to Jeannette at the SCPP office. Any information regarding the pharmacy and the person who provided the details of the incidents/errors will be kept anonymous. We encourage you to provide us with these incidents/errors so we can all learn from them.

## ***Volunteers for COMPASS™ Steering Committee***

SCPP is looking for additional members to be a part of the COMPASS steering committee. Committee members will be asked to review and consider the results of the most recent survey as well as provide feedback on the successes and challenges they faced with COMPASS™. The main goal of the committee will be to develop recommendations for the SCPP Council to consider when making decisions about the next steps for implementation of COMPASS™.

COMPASS™ pharmacy managers, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants are all welcome to be a part of the committee. If you are interested in the opportunity to have a voice regarding COMPASS™, please contact Jeannette.

## ***Previous Editions of Directions Newsletter***

For the benefit of new COMPASS™ pharmacies, previous editions of the Directions newsletter as well as other COMPASS™ information can be accessed on the SCPP website under the COMPASS™ tab.

## ***Contact Information***

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