
Merck Congratulates Ontario Government on Expanding Pharmacy Scope to Help Improve Access to Care

KIRKLAND, QC., May 28 – Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, congratulates the [Government of Ontario](#) for its recent regulatory amendments under the *Pharmacy Act, 1991* to expand the scope of practice for pharmacy professionals. This important policy change marks a shift toward more connected, convenient care for Ontarians by increasing points of access.

Starting in July 2026, pharmacists will be able to administer six additional publicly funded vaccines for eligible Ontarians, including tetanus, pertussis, diphtheria, pneumococcal, RSV and shingles. The province is also allowing pharmacists to assess and prescribe for nine additional common ailments, such as warts, head lice, nasal congestion and dry eyes, with plans to add up to five more in early 2027.

With an estimated 91% of Ontarians living within five kilometres of a pharmacy, these trusted providers are uniquely positioned to bring care closer to home. Expanding pharmacists' roles to include the administration of additional publicly funded vaccines and the management of more common ailments can help enable pharmacies to serve as community health hubs offering convenient access—particularly for communities facing provider shortages or long travel times.

“This initiative provides an additional option to help increase access to preventive care in Ontario by bringing services closer to where people live, work, and seek trusted advice,” said David Jones, Managing Director of Merck Canada. “We commend the Ontario government and the Minister of Health for recognizing pharmacies as essential access points and for empowering pharmacy professionals to play a broader role in supporting public health.”

Building on Important Progress

This latest decision reflects the government's commitment to help protect Ontario's health care system by providing more connected and convenient care across the province. It is part of a broader strategy to improve access through multiple avenues—consulting on ways to expand scopes of practice for other regulated healthcare professionals, such as optometrists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, dental hygienists.³ Together, these efforts unlock additional capacity across the system, improving access to timely care and easing pressures on primary care and emergency departments.³

Merck is encouraged by this progress and looks forward to future steps that continue expanding access to care for all Ontarians by enabling pharmacists to leverage the full extent of their training, helping to make pharmacies a one-stop-shop for convenient, everyday care.

About Merck

At Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, we are unified around our purpose: We use the power of leading-edge science to save and improve lives around the world. For more than 130 years, we have brought hope to humanity through the development of important medicines and vaccines. We aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world – and today, we are at the forefront of research to deliver innovative health solutions that advance the prevention and treatment of diseases in people and animals. We foster a diverse and inclusive global workforce and operate responsibly every day to enable a safe, sustainable, and healthy future for all people and communities. For more information about our operations in Canada, visit www.merck.ca and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) @MerckCanada.

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