



Statement of Christina Adams, Chief Pharmacy Officer  
Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists

North Dakota SB 2209 / SB 2212 in Senate Human Services Committee  
By invitation of the chair on Wednesday January 27, 2021

I am Christina Adams, the Chief Pharmacy Officer for the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists. We are a non-profit that represents Canadian pharmacy professionals working in hospitals to improve patient care by safe and effective medication use. I am also a practicing pharmacist.

I understand and sympathize with the challenges of financial barriers to healthcare, but I am concerned because our nation of 38 million people does not have the pharmaceutical supply for America's 329 million citizens. In fact, even the roughly 700,000 residents of North Dakota would have an impact on our patient safety if they shifted their purchasing to Canada.

Even before the pandemic, Canada already suffered drug shortages that endangered Canadian patients. Canadian pharmacists already manage as many as 2,000 drug shortages at any given time, and in a recent survey, [one in four residents reported being affected by drug shortages](#). In hospital settings, these shortages directly and negatively affect patient outcomes. Instead of doing clinical work with patients, pharmacists spend too much time sourcing scarce drugs, finding appropriate substitutes, repackaging for correct dosages, and communicating with other healthcare professionals about these shortages.

As an organization of pharmacists, CSHP is sympathetic to the challenges that North Dakota patients face in accessing affordable medicines, but importation is such a poor solution that we have joined the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies Canada to advocate for a ban on medicine exports for U.S. programs like these. In response, our federal government has delivered their message of opposition directly at the White House and in public comments on federal regulations. Additionally, they have recently enacted restrictions on Canadian wholesalers who wish to export medicine to the U.S. to make clear their intent to stop this practice.

Wholesale drug importation will hurt Canadians and it will not help North Dakota residents with drug prices. We hope you are able to pursue other avenues to make medicines more affordable.