

This is sent on Behalf of Hafsa Qureshi Grymek

I would like to extend an invitation to support and be a part of my research study on Ontario's upcoming Drug Information System. Let me introduce myself. I am a M.Sc. student in the eHealth Program at McMaster University. Part of my graduate work is to complete my thesis under Dr. Ann McKibbin, my supervisor and the local principal investigator of this study.

As you may know, Ontario will be the first province to implement two way electronic communication between physicians and pharmacists by 2012. eHealth Ontario and Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, with funding from Canada Health Infoway, is considering introducing this as a Drug Information System. This system will introduce and integrate electronic prescribing, electronic dispensing and electronic data interchange (two way electronic order communication between physicians and pharmacists regarding the medications of patients) between the prescribers and dispensers, which could radically change the current process for prescribing and dispensing medicines.

You may also be aware that eHealth Ontario has currently issued a request for qualifications (RFQ) for the implementation of this provincial Drug Information System. They are determined to deliver it on time. Many physicians and pharmacists appear to have mixed views about the system and consumers are probably not yet aware of it. I have been planning a study design to gain insight into the perceptions these stakeholders (prescribers, dispensers and users) have. The eHealth program from McMaster University wants to study requirements of the people who will be most affected - the consumers, the prescribers (family physicians and nurse practitioners) and community pharmacists.

A Scottish Study by Porteous et al (2003) called, "Electronic Transfer of prescription-related information: comparing views of patients, family physicians, and pharmacists" has generously provided us with their questionnaires. We have altered the content in the surveys to tailor it to Ontario's health care system and for its stakeholders.

Currently, this study has received ethics approval through the Office of Research Ethics at the McMaster University. I would request for your help and support in distributing these surveys to interested pharmacists with pharmacy management systems in their community pharmacies. Please recommend a convenient solution for distributing these questionnaires as well as recruiting community pharmacist participants for the study. We are hoping to receive 35 completed questionnaires by the end of August. Attached you will find the pharmacist questionnaire, study posters and a fact sheet to help potential participants understand the study more in detail. All

these documents can also be found on our website. For more information, you can visit us at www.DISPerceptionsSurvey.info/index.html. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Many Thanks & Warm Regards,

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