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Canadian Healthcare Association  
Association canadienne des soins de santé  
75 years of service / 75 années de service

## **Policy Positions Regarding Issues addressed by the National Pharmaceuticals Strategy**

### **PURCHASING STRATEGIES**

(Approved by Board of Directors, June 2006)

In September 2004, Canada's First Ministers agreed to establish a ministerial task force to develop and implement a National Pharmaceuticals Strategy (NPS) and to report on their progress by June 30, 2006. The fifth action of the National Pharmaceuticals Strategy is to pursue purchasing strategies to obtain best prices for Canadians for drugs and vaccines. CHA defines purchasing strategies as *strategies to obtain pharmaceuticals at a lower price through large volume purchasing, substitutions, etc.*

#### **Policy Positions**

- CHA supports the use of a variety of strategies to contain pharmaceutical expenditures, for example bulk purchasing, use of generics, restricted drug listings, etc.
- As a cost-containment strategy based on evidence, health system funders and managers should encourage the appropriate and cost-effective use of all pharmaceuticals.

#### **Background**

- There are many important strategies for managing pharmaceutical spending; examples include bulk purchasing, use of generics, reference-based pricing, and restricted drug listings.
- It has been noted with vaccines that bulk purchasing may lead to fewer drug suppliers and/or reduced access to some drugs, which is a concern if a need for a substitute manufacturer arises (Canadian Pharmacists Association, 2005a).

## References

- Bulk Purchasing, *Pharmaceutical Cost-Containment Strategies, Volume 1*, Canadian Pharmacists Association, January 2005a.

The Canadian Healthcare Association is a leader in developing, and advocating for, health policy solutions that meet the needs of Canadians.

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