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### **Expansion of Pharmacists Authority in Ontario**

I am writing on behalf of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP). We wish to congratulate the government on its announcement regarding expanding the role of pharmacists in Ontario, and urge that this initiative not lapse, but rather undergo civil society consultation and be successfully implemented.

We hear consistently from our Ontario CARP members that they are deeply concerned about their ability to access reliable and quality healthcare services. In fact, CARP members recently told us in a survey that their top concern is access to prompt, quality healthcare.

As the Government of Ontario's recent announcement acknowledges, pharmacists have an integral part to play in Canada's health care system, and increasing the scope of authority for pharmacists is a key step in improving the health care of Ontarians.

Here's why CARP is in support of this initiative and why we are urging the Ontario government to move this from a proposal through to implementation.

- Pharmacists are the most accessible health-care professionals in Canada, dispensing and providing advice on 750 million prescriptions per year.
- Convenient and close to home, pharmacists with expanded roles deliver an estimated \$4.7 billion of value per year by improving access to care and reducing pressure on the health-care system
- By allowing pharmacists to deliver more care options within their local communities, this move will mean those in Ontario can get certain healthcare needs addressed far more quickly, and will help free up family doctors to focus on patients with more complex medical issues.
- Other provincial governments in Canada have expanded authority in place for pharmacists, which means there are existing models in place regarding continuum of care and administration that the Ontario Government can look to.

CARP is eager to participate in the forthcoming consultations on this initiative. CARP believes that ensuring the perspective of older Canadians is heard will enhance the quality of healthcare programs and services as well as the relationship between government and its constituents.

Making it easier for highly skilled, regulated healthcare professionals, like pharmacists, to work to the full extent of their training is a significant step forward. Thank you for making this move towards a more enhanced access to medical care for seniors and others who currently have limited access to a family doctor.

Sincerely,

Bill VanGorder

*Bill VanGorder*

Chief Advocacy and Education Officer Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP)