

A Lose-Lose for Patients:



Time to Reset the PMPRB Reform Discussion

The framing of the debate around the reform of the Patent Medicines Price Review Board is a lose-lose situation for patients.

If prices remain at current levels, provinces will continue to slow down approval of new drugs. If prices are lower, as contemplated by the PMPRB reform, drug companies say they will delay introducing new drugs to the Canadian market. In both situations, patients get less access to new drugs that have demonstrated effectiveness.

Drug pricing discussions are happening all around the world. Price reform in Canada is an opportunity for stakeholders – patients, pharma and payers, to come together to learn from the best practices in other countries and work out a made in Canada solution that benefits patients, public drug budgets, private insurers and pharmaceutical companies.

Canada is recognized internationally for pioneering Health Technology Assessment as a means to assess the value of new pharmaceutical products and devices. That work and the creation of the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) came about through a collaborative process that built consensus around key principles. A similar initiative is needed to unlock the discussion around drug prices.

The way the debate is going, patients are the losers. And if patients are the losers, are there any real winners?

It is time to reset the PMPRB reform discussion.

About CLLPAG

CLL Patient Advocacy Group (CLLPAG) is a national advocacy group founded at an education meeting organized by Ontario CLL patients in 2002.

We are patients, caregivers and their supporters. All work is done on a volunteer basis. We maintain a website at cllpag.ca. CLLPAG has been very active in collecting patient evidence for the pCODR drug review process. We have organized patient conferences in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2015. Our most recent conference attracted 270 persons from Canada and around the world. Our next conference is in April 2018.

CLLPAG has participated in the PMPRB reform discussion from the beginning. The current consultation is about the new PMPRB regulations. We feel that our best contribution at this time is to call for a step back and a process that will find solutions that benefit patients.

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