



Climate, Health & Sustainable Care Inaugural Symposium



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climate.health@utoronto.ca 

Environmental Co-Benefits of Reducing Low-Value Care

Thomas Bodley, Brenda Chang, Anita Rao

Moderator: Karen Cameron



**Climate, Health &
Sustainable Care**
Inaugural Symposium

Acknowledgement

We want to acknowledge the support of the **New Initiative and Innovation Award - Network for Improving Health Systems** in allowing evidence and knowledge transfer of pharmacy and prescribing topics.



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LESLIE DAN FACULTY OF PHARMACY



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DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Climate Campaign

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Co-Director Using Labs Wisely, Choosing Wisely Canada

Disclosure



Co-director of the Using Labs Wisely program at
Choosing Wisely Canada

Climate change

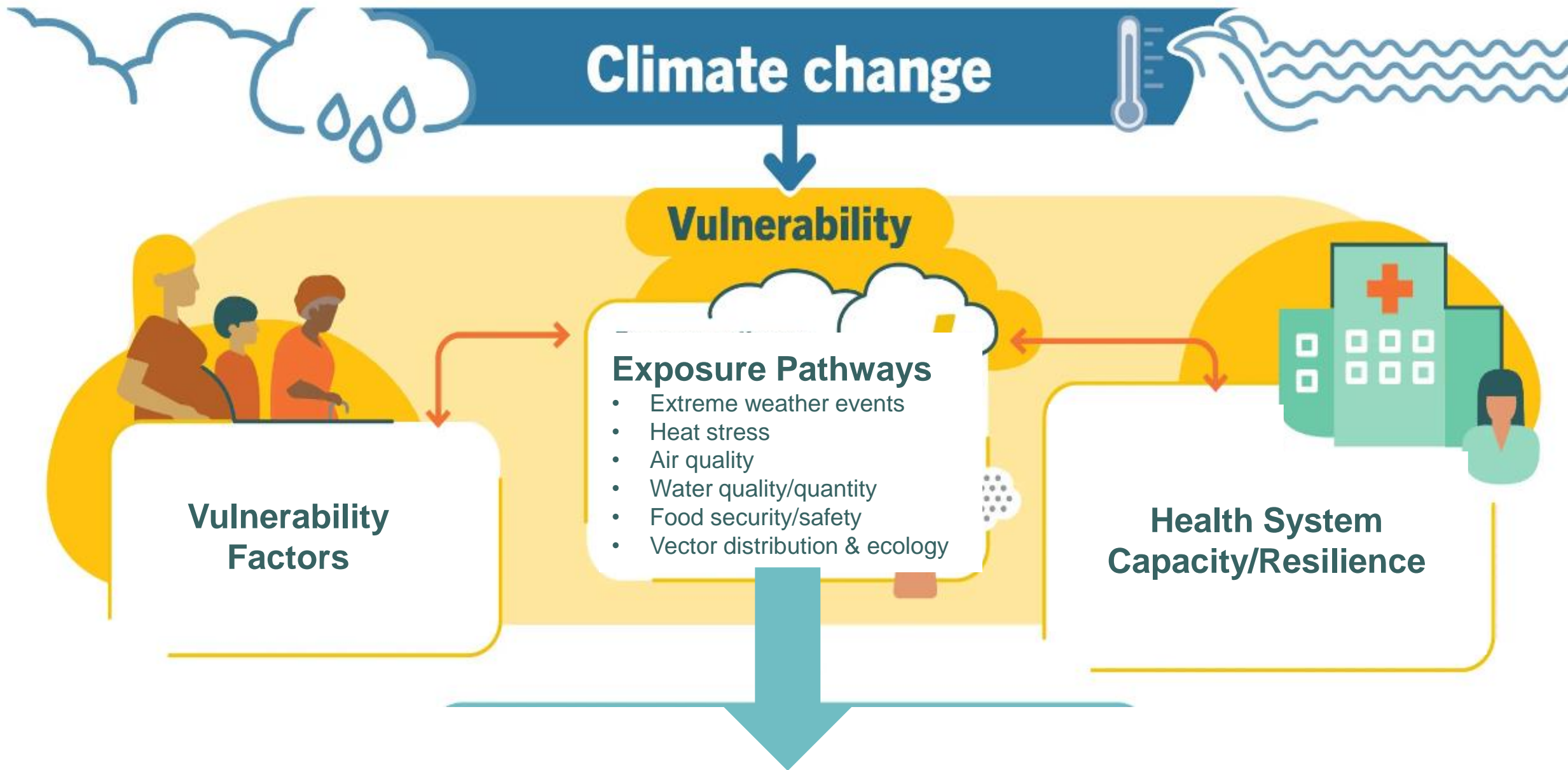
Vulnerability

Exposure Pathways

- Extreme weather events
- Heat stress
- Air quality
- Water quality/quantity
- Food security/safety
- Vector distribution & ecology

Vulnerability Factors

Health System Capacity/Resilience





Climate-sensitive health risks

Health outcomes



Injury and mortality from extreme weather events



Heat-related illness



Respiratory illness



Water-borne diseases and other water-related health impacts



Zoonoses



Vector-borne diseases



Malnutrition and food-borne diseases



Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)



Mental and psychosocial health

Health systems & facilities outcomes



Impacts on healthcare facilities



Effects on health systems





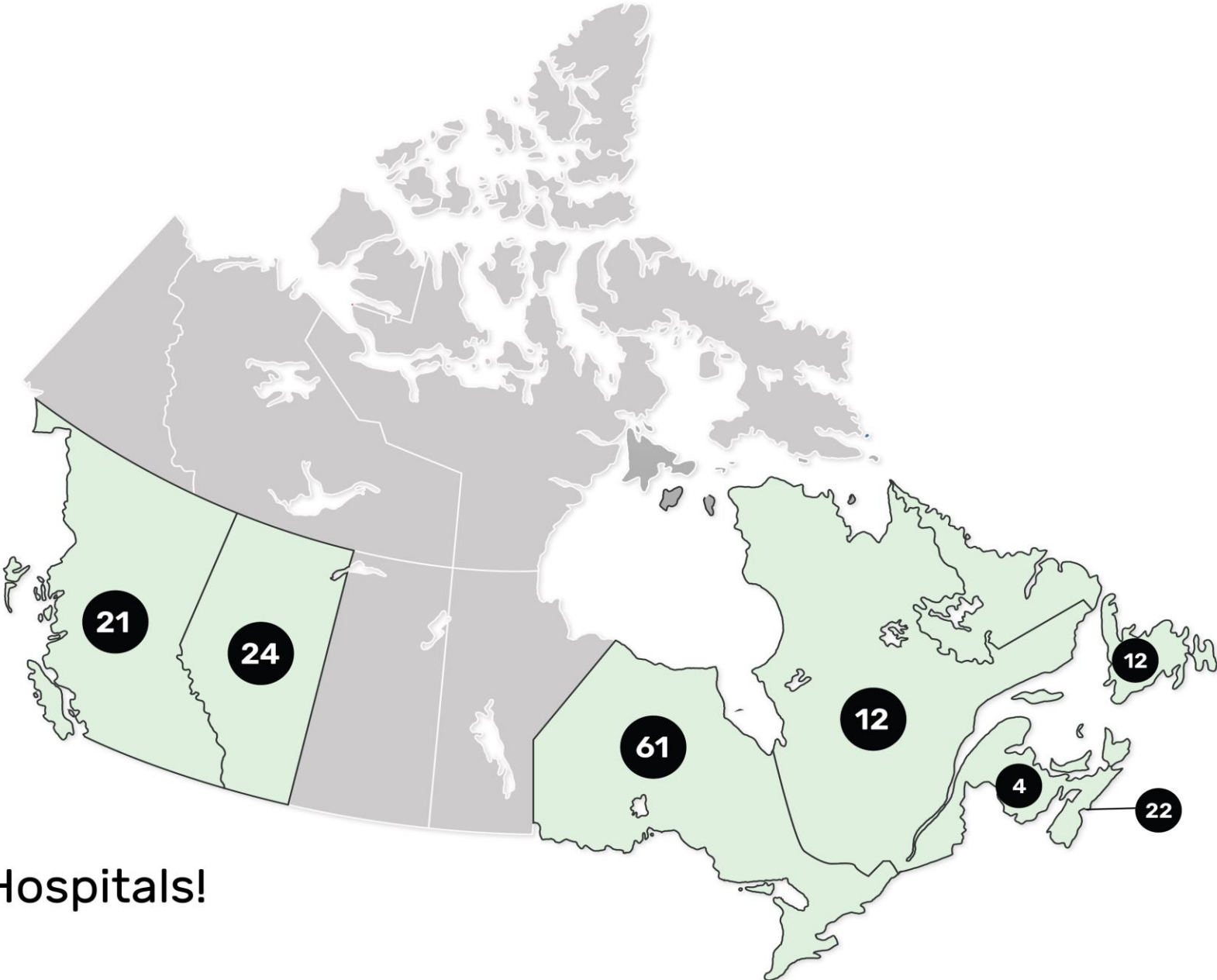
**Choosing Wisely
& Climate Action**



Choosing Wisely Canada – The Beginning



Using Labs Wisely.



As of October 2024

156 Participating Hospitals!



Using Blood Wisely.

An initiative of:

Choosing Wisely Canada

Canadian Blood Services

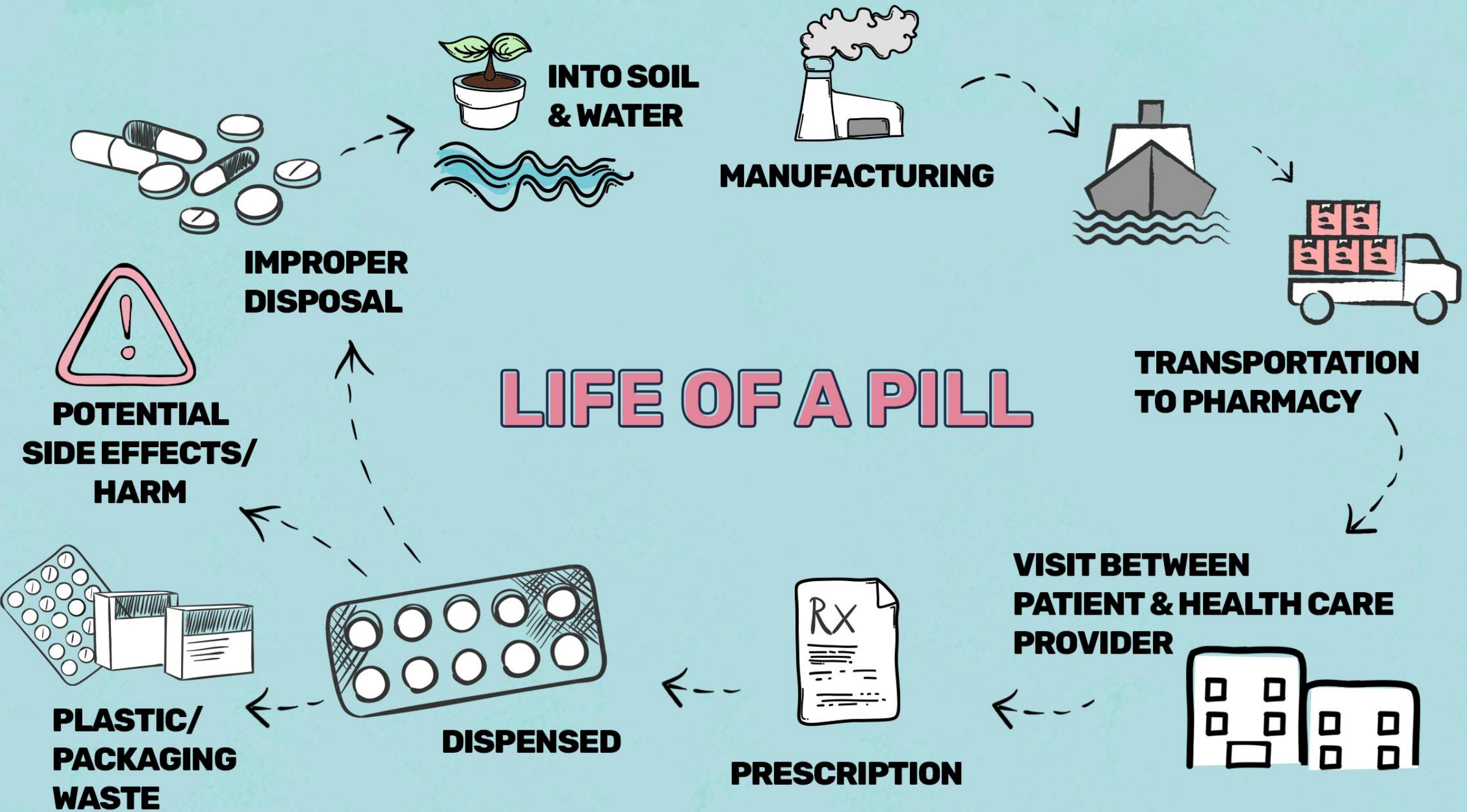
Héma-Québec

1. Benefits of Choosing Wisely in Practice

- Avoiding harm to patients
- Decreasing waste
- Improving access to high-value care



Everything we do has a carbon footprint



LIFE OF A PILL

MANUFACTURING

TRANSPORTATION TO PHARMACY

VISIT BETWEEN PATIENT & HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

PRESCRIPTION

DISPENSED

PLASTIC/PACKAGING WASTE

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS/HARM

IMPROPER DISPOSAL

INTO SOIL & WATER



20+
Societies



50+
New climate-conscious
recommendations



Review process

- Internal review to ensure that the recommendation meets the Choosing Wisely recommendation criteria
- Review with climate experts and patient advisors





Canadian Association of Hospital Dentists



Canadian Pharmacists Association

Association des pharmaciens du Canada



CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL CHEMISTS

THE COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS OF CANADA



LE COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE DU CANADA



L'Association Canadienne de Gastroentérologie



Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists



Société canadienne des pharmaciens d'hôpitaux



Canadian Psychiatric Association
Association des psychiatres du Canada



Choosing Wisely & Climate Action

Canadian Critical Care Society

Don't use gloves when hand hygiene is sufficient.

College of Family Physicians of Canada

Do not conduct in-person visits where virtual assessment would provide equivalent clinical value and is acceptable to patient.

Canadian Thoracic Society

Don't prescribe greenhouse gas-intensive MDIs for asthma [...] where an alternative inhaler with a lower carbon footprint [...] containing medications with comparable efficacy is available, and where [...] patient preference has been considered.



Choosing Wisely & Climate Action

Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists

Don't continue an intravenous medication when clinically appropriate to step down to oral therapy.

Canadian Nurses Association

Don't bring surplus supplies into patient care rooms if they will need to be disposed of after the patient is transferred or discharged.

Canadian Society of Internal Medicine

Don't prescribe heparin or low molecular weight heparin in situations where oral options are effective, preferred by the patient, and felt to be safe by the prescriber.





Environmental Co-Benefits of Reducing Low-Value Care

Perspectives from a Primary Care Pharmacist

Brenda Chang, RPh, PharmD, ACPR
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October 22, 2024

Disclosures

Presenter Personal Disclosures

I have no current or past relationships with commercial entities.

Commercial Support Disclosures

This presentation has received no financial or in-kind support from any commercial or other organization.

Note: Use of some brand names may be mentioned for ease of understanding but there are no promotional intentions.

Acknowledgements

Benzodiazepine project

- Dr. Noor Ramji, Dr. Emma Jeavons, Dr. Tina Hu, Dr. Rachel Skocylas, Celia Schwartz, Katie Sussman, Lisa Miller

Inhaler project and related work

- Dr. Caroline Ruderman, Dr. Samantha Green, Dr. Shima Shakoury
- Jessica Visentin, RPh, Gabrielle Busque, RPh, Megi Qirkollari, RPh, Justin O'Connor-Cook, RPh, Helen Spencer, RPh, Garen Chan

Low-Value Care

- **Low-value care** includes care practices (tests, treatments or procedures) that have been identified, using scientific evidence, to be unnecessary, ineffective or harmful in hospital, primary-care, long-term care or public-health contexts¹
- Low-value care generates carbon emissions, waste, and pollution without improving patient or population health
- By reducing low-value care, we can produce “co-benefits” for the environment
- One of the most common examples related to medications is the use of antibiotics for a viral infection



Image from:
<https://choosingwiselycanada.org/using-antibiotics-wisely-across-Canada/>

1. Parker G, Hunter S, Born K, Miller FA. Mapping the Environmental Co-Benefits of Reducing Low-Value Care: A Scoping Review and Bibliometric Analysis. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2024, 21, 818. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph2107818>

Medications and the Environment

- Canada's healthcare system is responsible for **4.6%** of the national total greenhouse gas emissions¹
- Medications are estimated to contribute to **25%** of the carbon footprint of the healthcare sector¹
- Canada has proportionally more emissions from medications than the US (~10%) and Australia (~18%)¹



Image from:
<https://www.ti.ubc.ca/2023/06/20/143-reducing-the-adverse-environmental-impacts-of-prescribing/>

1. Eckelman MJ, Sherman JD, MacNeill AJ (2018) Life cycle environmental emissions and health damages from the Canadian healthcare system: An economic-environmental epidemiological analysis. PLoS Med 15(7): e1002623. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002623>

Medications and the Environment

- Medications can be damaging to the environment in many ways¹:
 - Manufacturing process
 - Excretion by the end user
 - Improper disposal
- A recent UK study found that the highest pharmaceutical concentrations are in areas of poor wastewater/waste management based on 1000 sampling sites in >100 countries²
- Concentrations of at least one pharmaceutical ingredient were found to be above levels considered safe for aquatic organisms, or of concern in terms of selection for antimicrobial resistance in ¼ of the sampling sites²



Image from:
<https://www.feam.eu/wp-content/uploads/Pharmaceuticals-in-the-Environment-Summary-report.pdf>

1. Park JY, Miller FA. Climate Resilient, Low Carbon Sustainable Pharmacy version 1.0 (2023) [Internet]. CASCADES (Creating a Sustainable Canadian Health System in a Climate Crisis). [Cited Sept 11, 2024]. Available from <https://cascadescanada.ca/resources/climate-resilient-low-carbon-sustainable-pharmacy-playbook/>

2. Wilkinson JL et al. Pharmaceutical pollution of the world's rivers. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. 2022 Vol. 119 No. 8 e211394711 <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2113947119>

Medication optimization is a key mitigation strategy for supporting low carbon care

Actions proposed by CASCADES¹:

1. Consider the environmental risks of medications when prescribing, during shared decision-making processes and when dispensing
2. Recommend change from high carbon/environmental impact products to lower impact alternatives where appropriate
3. Identify and discontinue unnecessary medications as appropriate
4. Encourage preventative and non-pharmacologic interventions where appropriate
5. Educate and review proper medication administration and device use to help improve adherence
6. Advise patients to return medications and medical sharps for disposal to a pharmacy

1. Park JY, Miller FA. Climate Resilient, Low Carbon Sustainable Pharmacy version 1.0 (2023) [Internet]. CASCADES (Creating a Sustainable Canadian Health System in a Climate Crisis). [Cited Sept 11, 2024]. Available from <https://cascadescanada.ca/resources/climate-resilient-low-carbon-sustainable-pharmacy-playbook/>

Examples from St. Michael's Academic Family Health Team



Family Practice at 61 Queen

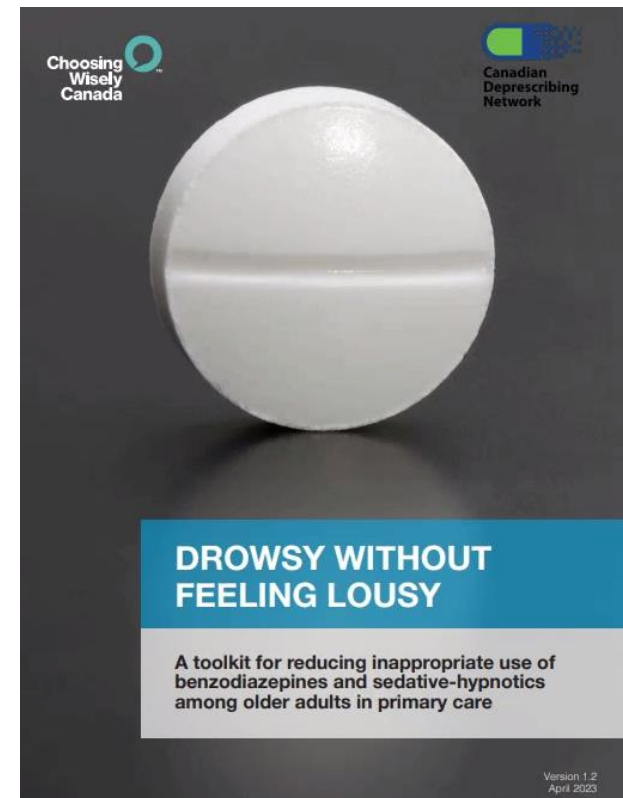


Health Centre at 80 Bond

1. Benzodiazepine (BZD) Deprescribing in the Elderly
2. Metered-dose inhaler (MDI) to Dry-powder inhaler (DPI)

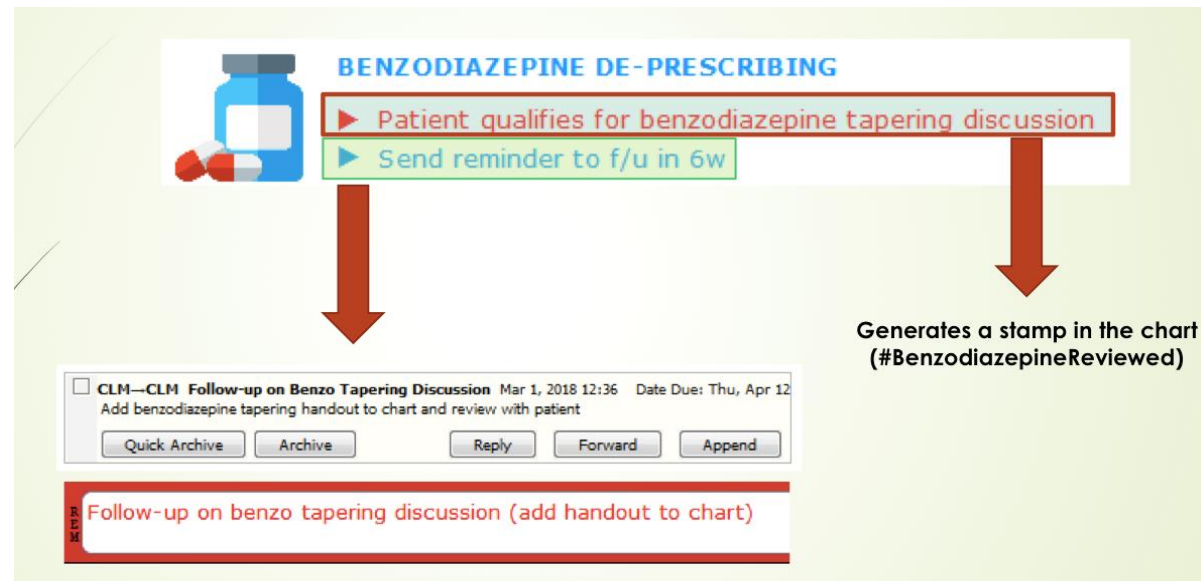
BZD Deprescribing Project

- Don't use benzodiazepines or other sedative-hypnotics in older adults as first choice for insomnia, agitation or delirium.
- Don't routinely prescribe benzodiazepines or other sedative-hypnotics for promotion of sleep without first a trial of non-pharmacologic interventions.



BZD Deprescribing Project

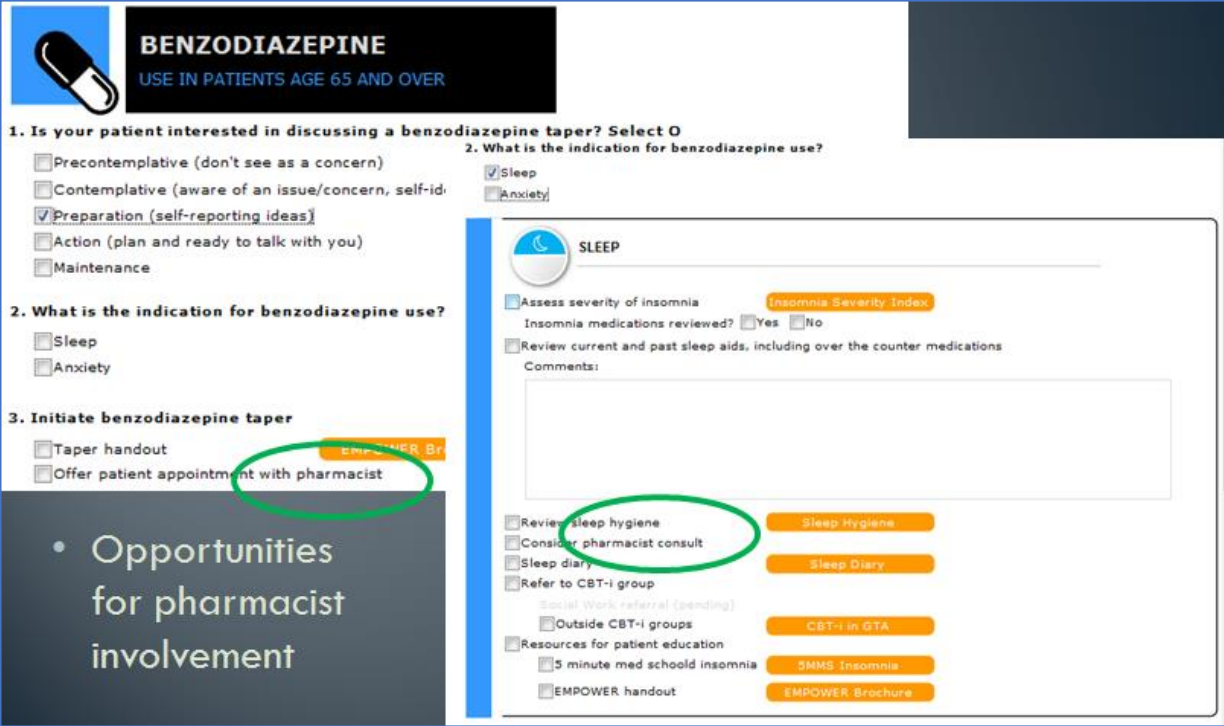
- Creation of a toolbar that appears for age ≥ 65 years and an active BZD Rx



- Identify and discontinue unnecessary medications as appropriate

BZD Deprescribing Project

- Cascading form with tools, referral pathways, non-pharmacological options



BENZODIAZEPINE
 USE IN PATIENTS AGE 65 AND OVER

1. Is your patient interested in discussing a benzodiazepine taper? Select **0**

Precontemplative (don't see as a concern)
 Contemplative (aware of an issue/concern, self-id-
 Preparation (self-reporting ideas)
 Action (plan and ready to talk with you)
 Maintenance

2. What is the indication for benzodiazepine use?

Sleep
 Anxiety

3. Initiate benzodiazepine taper

Taper handout
 Offer patient appointment with pharmacist

SLEEP

Assess severity of insomnia **Insomnia Severity Index**
 Insomnia medications reviewed? Yes No

Review current and past sleep aids, including over the counter medications
 Comments:

Review sleep hygiene **Sleep Hygiene**
 Consider pharmacist consult **Sleep Diary**
 Sleep diary
 Refer to CBT-i group **CBT-i in GTA**
Social Work referral (pending)
 Outside CBT-i groups **SMMS Insomnia**
 Resources for patient education **EMPOWER Brochure**
 5 minute med school insomnia
 EMPOWER handout

Opportunities for pharmacist involvement

- Identify and discontinue unnecessary medications as appropriate
- Encourage preventative and non-pharmacological interventions where appropriate

BZD Deprescribing Project

Tapering-off program

Be sure to talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist before you try reducing your dose or stopping your medication.

WEEKS	TAPERING SCHEDULE							✓
	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA	SU	
1 and 2	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
3 and 4	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
5 and 6	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
7 and 8	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
9 and 10	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
11 and 12	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
13 and 14	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
15 and 16	×	●	×	×	●	×	●	
17 and 18	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	

EXPLANATIONS			
●	●	●	×
Full dose	Half dose	Quarter of a dose	No dose

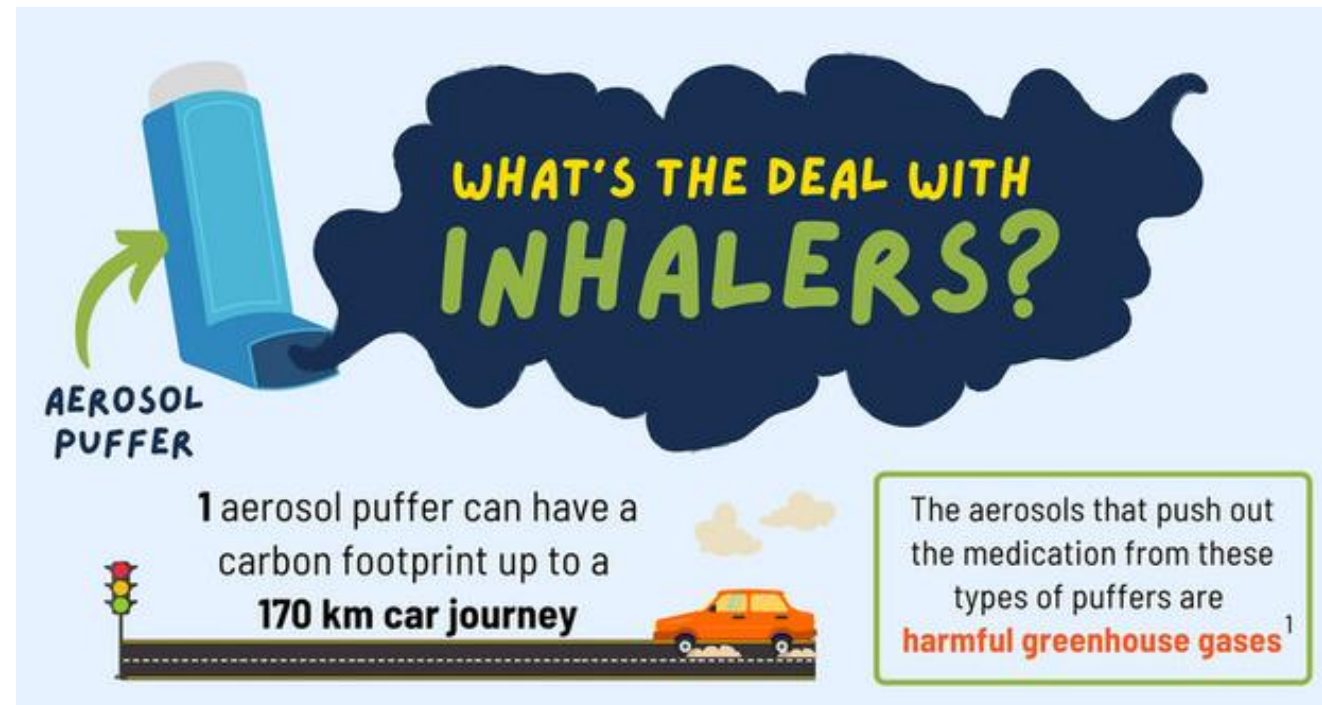
- EMPOWER handout
- Or individualized tapering plan created by the pharmacist

BZD Deprescribing Project

	Site	No. of patients ≥65 years on a BZD	No. of rostered patients ≥65 years	% of total rostered patients
Jan 2016	61 Queen	228	2257	10.10%
	80 Bond	78	808	9.65%
Feb 2018	61 Queen	95	2295	4.14%
	80 Bond	46	930	4.95%
Sept 2024	61 Queen	86	2861	3.01%
	80 Bond	64	1250	5.12%

- Toolbar removed by end of 2018 due to success (but EMPOWER tool kept)
- Prescribing trend continues to be low, particularly at one site

MDI to DPI Project




MDI to DPI Project

- Waiting room and Exam room posters for shared decision making


MDIs vs. DPIs

Did you know that there's a huge difference in the climate impact of inhalers? - The meds that help you breathe are **suffocating** the environment


<p>What are MDIs?</p>  <p>Metered-Dose Inhaler is a common medication device used for patients with asthma or COPD</p>	<p>What are DPIs?</p>  <p>Dry Powder Inhalers is a breath-activated medication device without a chemical propellant to push the medication out</p>
<p>Excessive carbon footprint</p>  <p>It has been estimated that MDIs represent 3% of the entire healthcare system's carbon footprint</p>	<p>Update your prescription</p>  <p>DPIs are more sustainable alternatives - its carbon footprint is 30 times smaller than MDIs</p>
<p>Trap heat & act as air pollutants</p>  <p>The hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) propellant in MDI is a potent greenhouse gas - 100 doses from an MDI is equivalent to a 290 km journey by car</p>	<p>Do your part, make the switch</p>  <p>Make the conscious choice to help the environment breathe – talk to your health care provider for this switch!</p>

Dry-Powder vs. Metered Dose Inhalers

Dry-Powder Inhalers or DPIs






Metered Dose Inhalers or MDIs



Both types of inhalers help to treat chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma and COPD.

However, MDIs

 <p>Represent 3% of the entire healthcare system's carbon footprint.</p>	 <p>Are a potent greenhouse gas 100 doses from an MDI is equivalent to a 290 km journey by car.</p>	 <p>Air pollutants that can worsen your condition.</p>
---	--	---

DPIs are a good alternative to MDIs and the carbon footprint is 30 times smaller, so they are better for the environment!

Ask your doctor today about whether DPIs are a good fit for you!

Learn more at: <https://thorax.org/content/75/1/92>

Family & Community Medicine
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

- Consider the environmental risks of medications when prescribing, during shared decision-making processes and when dispensing

MDI to DPI Project

- Prescription “favourites” and prescriber tools to support choice in prescribing

Shortcut	Treatment
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Advair Diskus FLUT PROP/SALM 100/50mcg 4-11yrs	fluticasone propion-salmeterol 100-50 mcg/d
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Advair Diskus FLUT PROP/SALM 250/50mcg ≥12yrs	fluticasone propion-salmeterol 250-50 mcg/d
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Advair Diskus FLUT PROP/SALM 500/50mcg ≥12yrs	fluticasone propion-salmeterol 500-50 mcg/d
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Advair MDI ***CONSIDER FIRST DPI e.g. Advair Diskus or Breo Ellipta	fluticasone propion-salmeterol 125-25 mcg/d
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Breo Ellipta FLUT FURO/VILA 100/25mcg ≥10yrs	fluticasone furoate-vilanterol 100-25 mcg/d
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Breo Ellipta FLUT FURO/VILA 200/25mcg ≥18yrs	fluticasone furoate-vilanterol 200-25 mcg/d
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Symbicort Turbuhaler BUDE/FORM 100/6mcg CONTROLLER + RELIEVER ≥12yrs	budesonide-formoterol 100-6 mcg/actuation
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Symbicort Turbuhaler BUDE/FORM 100/6mcg CONTROLLER ≥12yrs	budesonide-formoterol 100-6 mcg/actuation
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Symbicort Turbuhaler BUDE/FORM 200/6mcg CONTROLLER + RELIEVER ≥12yrs	budesonide-formoterol 200-6 mcg/actuation
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Symbicort Turbuhaler BUDE/FORM 200/6mcg CONTROLLER ≥12yrs	budesonide-formoterol 200-6 mcg/actuation
#InhalerAsthma_ICs/LABA_Symbicort Turbuhaler BUDE/FORM 200/6mcg RELIEVER ≥12yrs **ODB LU NOT APPLICABLE	budesonide-formoterol 200-6 mcg/actuation

ASTHMA IN ADULTS: GREEN INHALER OPTIONS

Cost estimates are based on generic pricing in all cases where a generic is available. Cost estimates are also based on pricing at Shoppers Drug Mart (includes markup and dispensing fee of \$11.99). Cost may be 10-20% lower at Costco or independent pharmacies.

Reliever Therapy

SABA

Ventolin pMDI (salbutamol) 200 doses
 100-200 mcg QID PRN (max 800 mcg/day)
 100 mcg \$18.67 ✓ ODB

Symbicort Turbuhaler (budesonide/formoterol) 120 doses
 1-2 inh QID PRN (max 6 inh at a time and 8 inh/day) *
 100 mcg \$94.55 // 200 mcg \$118.78
 X ODB (LU code does not apply for reliever therapy)

Bricanyl Turbuhaler (terbutaline) 100 doses
 0.5 -1.0 mg QID PRN (max 3 mg/day)
 0.5 mg \$23.19 ✓ ODB

Class	Drug and Doses/Device	Device Type	ODB Coverage
SABA	Airomir HFA (salbutamol) 200 doses	pMDI	Yes
	Bricanyl Turbuhaler (terbutaline) 120 doses	DPI	Yes
	Ventolin HFA (salbutamol) and generics 200 doses	pMDI	Yes
	Ventolin Diskus (salbutamol) 60 doses	DPI	No
SAMA	Atrovent HFA (ipratropium) 200 doses	pMDI	Yes
SAMA/SABA	Combivent Respimat (ipratropium/salbutamol) 120 doses	SMI	No
ICS	Aermony Respiclick (fluticasone propionate) 60 doses	DPI	Yes
	Alvesco (ciclesonide) 120 doses	pMDI	Yes
	Arnuity Ellipta (fluticasone furoate) 30 doses	DPI	Yes

- Recommend change from high carbon/environmental impact products to lower impact alternatives where appropriate

MDI to DPI Project

- Pharmacy intervention for change or discontinuation of inhalers

PHARMACY RECOMMENDATION FOR CLIMATE CONSCIOUS INHALER PRESCRIBING

This form was developed as part of a quality improvement project. The goal of this project is to facilitate a shift from the use of Metered Dose Inhalers to Dry Powder Inhalers in an effort to promote climate conscious prescribing.

Pharmacy Assessment

Start time: End time:

Patient has Asthma listed in the Problem List or Past Medical History | Yes | No

Patient has documented PFTs confirming asthma diagnosis | Yes | No

Patient is currently on the following MDI(s):

Patient is currently on the following DPI(s):

Patient is a candidate for a switch to dry powder inhale | Yes | No

Pharmacist Recommendation

- Recommend change from high carbon/environmental impact products to lower impact alternatives where appropriate
- Identify and discontinue unnecessary medications as appropriate
- Educate and review proper medication administration and device use to help improve adherence

MDI to DPI Project

- Waiting room posters for proper inhaler disposal

Proper Disposal of Inhalers

Why it's important:



When thrown in the garbage for landfill, inhalers release greenhouse gases into the environment



100 puffs of a metered-dose inhaler is equivalent to a 290 km car ride

How to properly dispose of your inhalers:



Return them to our clinic





Return them to your local community pharmacy





Do NOT throw them in the garbage or recycling



Our clinic and community pharmacies can collect inhalers to send them for incineration, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions compared to landfill

Interested to learn more?



SCAN ME

ST. MICHAEL'S
UNITY HEALTH TORONTO

Did you know?



1 metered dose inhaler with 100 puffs



EQUIVALENT TO 290 km car journey

You can help!

1. Ask your doctor about switching to dry powder inhalers
2. Return unwanted inhalers to pharmacy for disposal

Estimated carbon footprint (g CO₂ eq)

1 dose (2 puffs) of a metered dose inhaler

500

1 dose of a dry power inhaler

20



Support green inhaler for sustainable healthcare

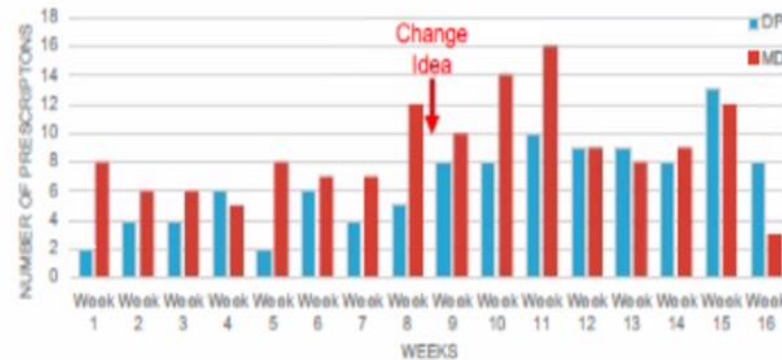
Scan to learn more:



- Advise patients to return medications for disposal to a pharmacy

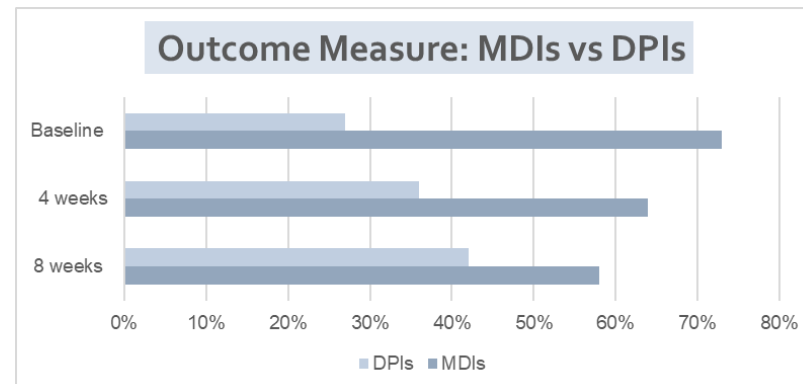
MDI to DPI Project

- Quality improvement results (medical resident project 2021)



- “Favourites” used >1000 times
- Number of DPI prescriptions increased after the change ideas were implemented (p=0.0006)
- MDI:DPI was 1:1 after change ideas were implemented

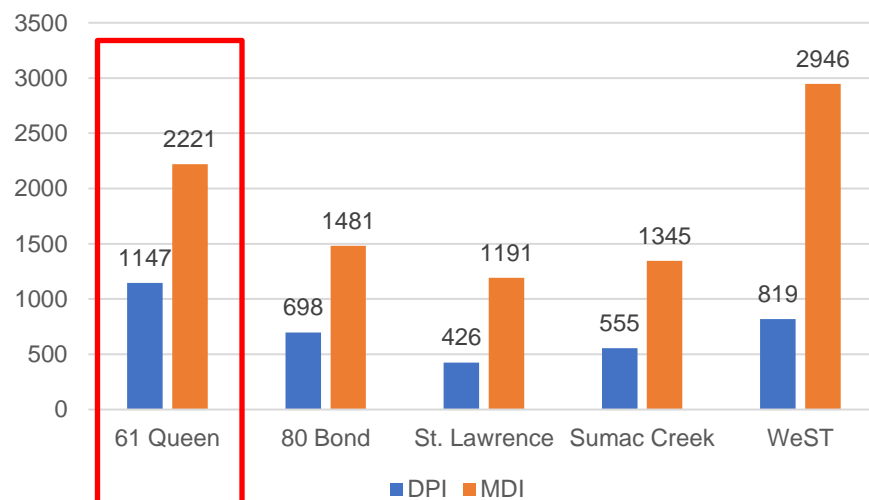
- Additional quality improvement results (pharmacy resident project 2023)



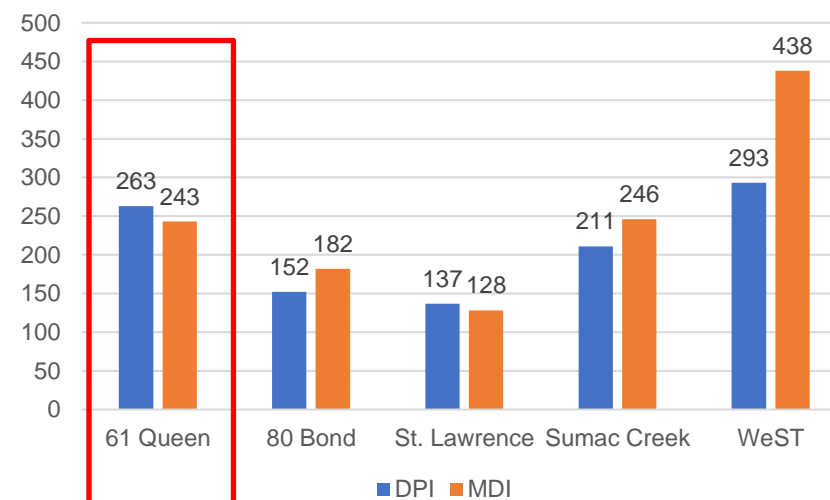
- There was a **15% decrease** in the percentage of MDIs and a **15% increase** in the percentage of DPIs 8 weeks post intervention, P=0.0003.
- Total number of inhalers reduced from 335 to 287 (**14% decrease**)

MDI to DPI Project

Number of MDI and DPI prescriptions
 1 Jan – 7 Nov, 2022 (~10 months)

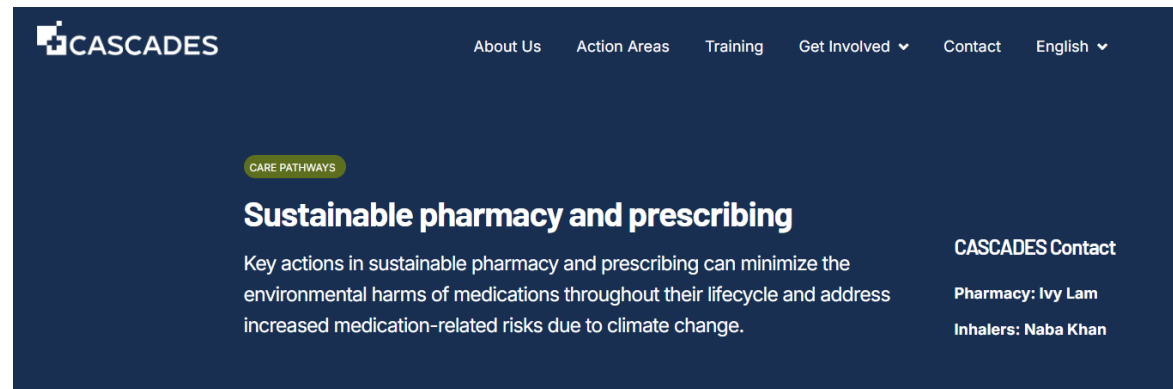


Number of MDI and DPI prescriptions
 Q1 : 1 April- 30 June, 2024 (3 months)



- Site with additional pharmacy intervention showed most significant shift in inhaler prescribing
- Trend to shifting MDI prescriptions to DPI prescriptions for all sites

Helpful resources



The screenshot shows the CASCADES website header with navigation links: About Us, Action Areas, Training, Get Involved, Contact, and English. A 'CARE PATHWAYS' tag is visible above the main heading 'Sustainable pharmacy and prescribing'. The text below the heading states: 'Key actions in sustainable pharmacy and prescribing can minimize the environmental harms of medications throughout their lifecycle and address increased medication-related risks due to climate change.' On the right side, contact information is listed: 'CASCADES Contact', 'Pharmacy: Ivy Lam', and 'Inhalers: Naba Khan'.

<https://cascadescanada.ca/action-areas/pharmacy-and-prescribing/>



The screenshot shows the header of the Canadian Medication Appropriateness and Deprescribing Network website with navigation links: About, Public, Health Care Providers, Students, Policy, Research, Our partners, and Contact us. The main image features a person's hands holding a pill bottle and pills, with the text 'PROMOTING SAFE AND APPROPRIATE USE OF MEDICATIONS FOR ALL CANADIANS' overlaid.

<https://www.deprescribingnetwork.ca>

Takeaways...

- Medications are not always helpful to our patients and can be damaging to the environment
- Many opportunities exist for deprescribing and/or medication optimization which can support improved patient outcomes AND more climate resilient low carbon care
- Shift in prescribing habits may take time but it can happen
- Pharmacists can play a critical role in deprescribing and medication optimization efforts
- Learners may have an interest in planetary health and sustainability so consider including learners in sustainability initiatives

Thank you!



HEALTH

Low-Value Care

Eliminating Unnecessary Medical Gases

Anita Rao, MDCM, FRCPC

Disclosures

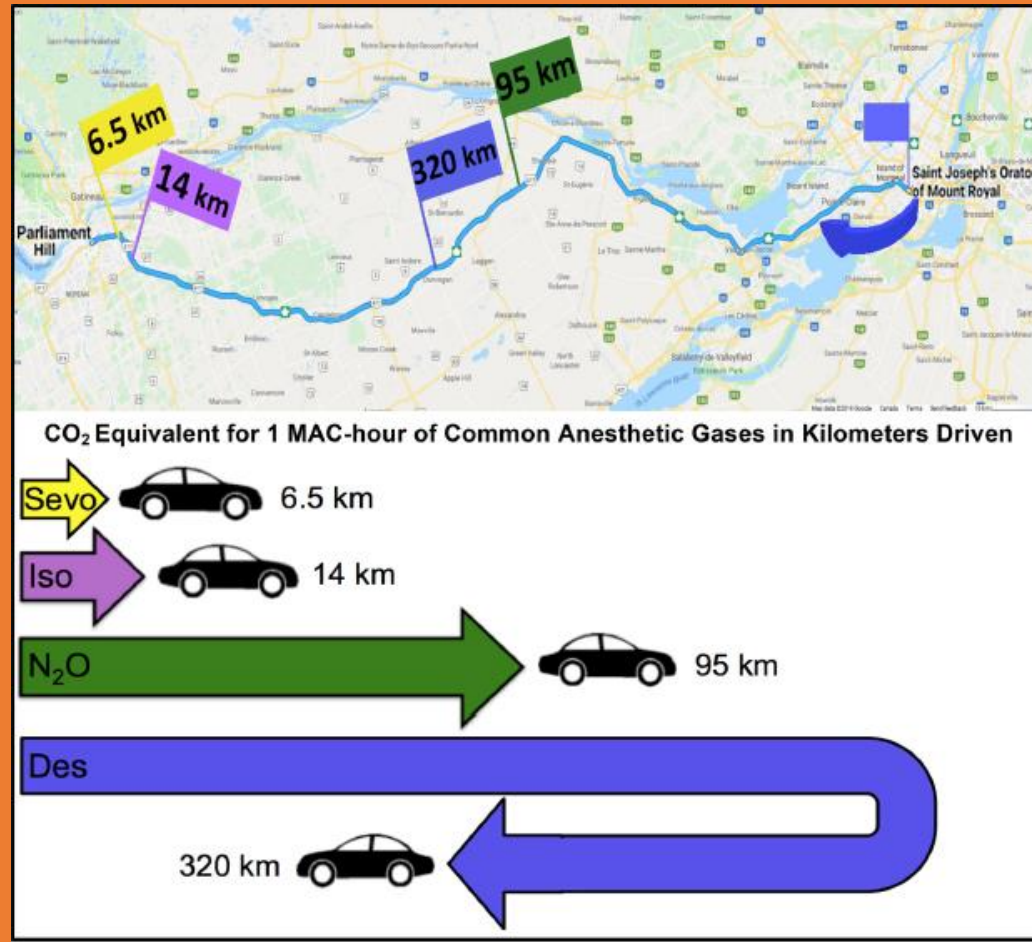
- I receive a salary from Trillium Health Partners as Physician Lead, Environmental Sustainability.
- I have received a stipend from CASCADES as Chair of the CASCADES Pan-Canadian Networks for Sustainable Perioperative Care.
- Funded trial: Our department received funding from Can-Health for trial of memsorb™.

De-Implementation

Barriers to changing clinical practice:

- i. Provider
- ii. Patient
- iii. Social Context
- iv. Organization
- v. Economic

Culprit Gases: Des and N2O





Desflurane Elimination

Like MDI's, anesthetic gases are CFC. Desflurane has highest GWP = 2450.

20 years of research has shown that desflurane is not clinically superior to alternatives with much lower carbon footprint.

Current desflurane ban in NHS UK and proposed phase out in EU by 2026

Expensive and 20 times more polluting than the most common anesthetic gas



Choosing Wisely & Climate Action

Reducing unnecessary tests, treatments and procedures is an opportunity to benefit both patients and the planet.



Consensus: Ditch the Des

Don't use desflurane when other anesthetic drugs and techniques are equally effective and less harmful to the environment – Choosing Wisely



Barriers

- Some anesthesiologists prefer its pharmacokinetic profile
- Convince providers that the environment and health care resources are valuable considerations
- Unsupported concerns such as drug shortages, superiority for special patient populations

Advocacy Strategies

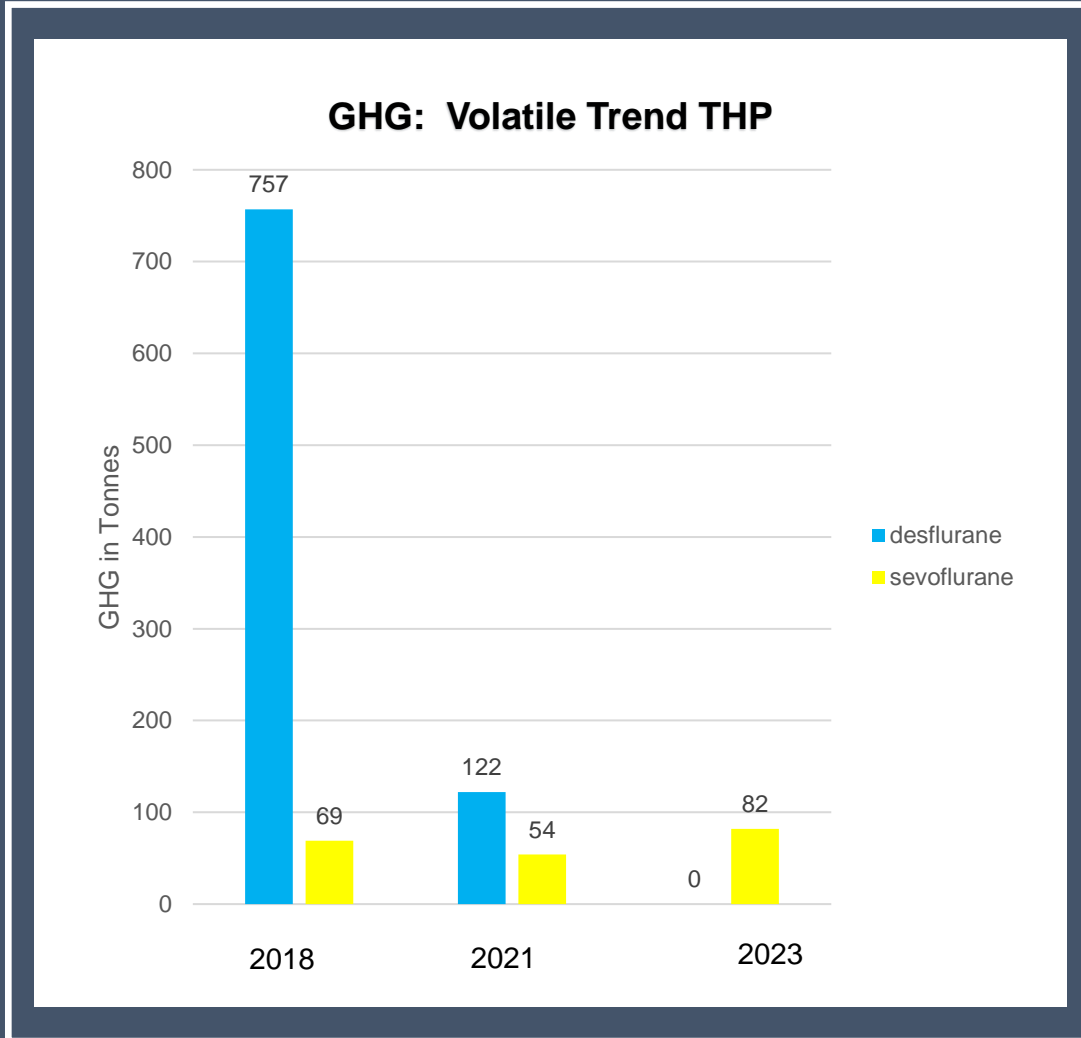
Bottom-up approach

- OA provides a “Greening the OR” rounds Approximately 20 departments/provincial/university rounds to date. Provide support to departments, resources and personalized advice.

Top-down approach

- Engaging with politicians and organizations such as political parties, Accreditation Canada, Canadian Standards Association, CASCADES



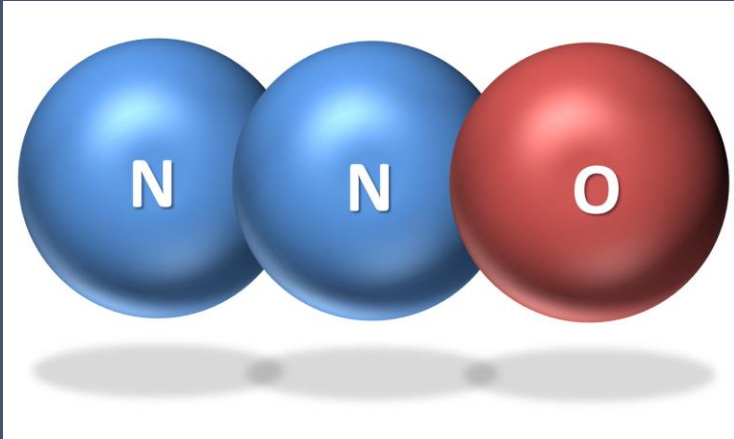


Desflurane elimination in a Large community Hospital

10-fold reduction in GHG and cost savings of \$60,000/year

Ditched the Des!

Brockville General Hospital	Collingwood General and Marine Hospital	Grand River Hospital	Grey Bruce Health Services	Groves Memorial Community Hospital	Huntsville District Memorial Hospital	Kingston Health Sciences Centre
Lennox & Addington County General Hospital	Michael Garron Hospital (Toronto East Health Network)	North York General Hospital	Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital	Perth Smith Falls District Hospital	Quinte Health	Scarborough Health Network
Sinai Health	Southlake Regional Health Centre	St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto	St. Mary's General Hospital	St. Mike's Hospital	Sudbury Health Sciences North	Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)	Timmins and District Hospital	Trillium Health Partners	Unity Health Toronto	University Health Network	West Parry Sound Health Centre	Women's College Hospital



About Nitrous Oxide

- Historically used in healthcare facilities as an anesthetic gas and labour analgesia
- Diminishing relevance to the practice of anesthesia as better anesthetic gases have been developed over the past 30 years
- Very long-lasting greenhouse gas (114 years) with 273x the global warming potential compared to CO₂ and detrimental to our ozone layer



Current State

- Centralized nitrous oxide distribution systems have very high leakage rates in nearly every audited centralized system both in Europe and North America
 - >90% typically found regardless of preventative maintenance measures
- Impacting indoor air quality and likely exceeding occupational health and safety standards for gas concentrations when leaks occur in patient and staff areas: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

Site	Leakage Rate	Amount of N2O (litres/yr)	GHG (tCO2e/yr)	Additional Notes
LHSC – Victoria Hospital	90%	1,000,000	580	
LHSC – University Hospital	99%	720,000	390	2 manifolds, negligible usage
Trillium Health Partners	Estimate >95%	2,150,000	1,250	\$90k /year
Sunnybrook	99%	3,100,000	1,800	
Vancouver General Hospital	> 99%	520,000	265	
CHUM				
NHS Lothian Site 1	> 98%	970,000	570	Multiple sites with similar results

Centralized N2O Distribution Systems Audits

New Builds

- Centralized N₂O systems should not be included in new builds.
- Joint Commission, AHQR and NHS have guidance documents supporting omission of centralized systems.



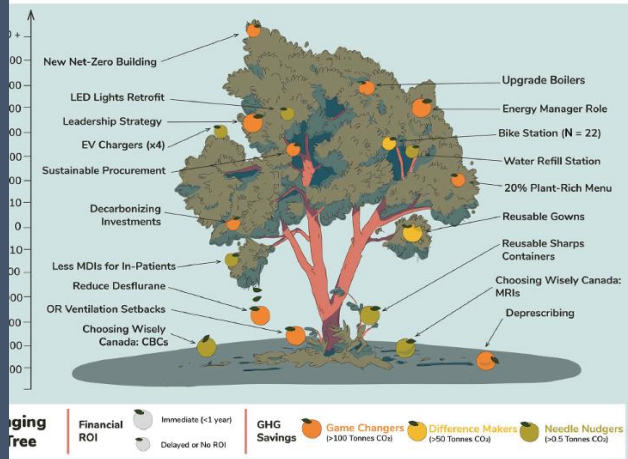


Goal

- To align “CSA Z7396.1: Medical gas pipeline systems” with current best-practice.
- Strongly recommend eliminating nitrous oxide distribution systems from healthcare facilities where possible

Ensuring they do not get built by default into new healthcare facilities

Diagram comparing the impact of interventions on costs and GHG emissions across seven different



EV - electric vehicle; GHG - greenhouse gas; LED - light-emitting diode; MDI - metered dose inhaler; MRI - magnetic resonance imaging; ROI - return on investment.
 Adapted by Myles Sargeant, illustration by Aidan Lucas and editing by Sujane Kandasamy and Eric Cook.

Summary

- Medical Gases: Easy win for eliminating low-value care
- Triple bottom line
- No impact on quality of patient care
- Low Hanging fruit!





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Environmental Co-Benefits of Reducing Low-Value Care

Thomas Bodley, Brenda Chang, Anita Rao

Moderator: Karen Cameron



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