

Minister Matthews' Statement On Sandoz Drug Supply

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Ontario is taking action to address the effects stemming from production and distribution issues at the Sandoz Canada plant in Boucherville, Quebec. Sandoz produces several critical drugs that are used routinely to treat patients in hospitals and other care settings.

Sandoz notified the ministry on February 28 of the supply implications of issues at its production facilities. Sandoz is focussing their production on key surgical and pain medications and has committed to inform customers of projected drug allocations so that they may plan accordingly.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care immediately contacted health care sector partners to develop a plan to address any potential drug shortages. This plan includes:

1. An assessment of the inventory of drugs and potential effects on services
2. A redistribution plan to move available supplies of drugs across the province to where they are most urgently needed
3. Provincial coordination of procurement of affected drugs
4. A plan for service delivery in the event of drug shortages, including the identification of alternatives
5. Ongoing communications with the health care sector

To support this work, the ministry has assembled a Technical Advisory Group with representatives from the Ontario Hospital Association and other key organizations from the health sector.

Yesterday, I wrote my federal counterpart, Minister Aglukkaq, to urge federal action in locating alternative supplies of the affected drugs and to facilitate their import. Ministry officials are also working with the federal government and other provinces on national strategies to address the shortages.

Health care providers that have questions about short-term supply of Sandoz drug products can contact the Ministry directly at 1-866-212-2272.

QUICK FACTS

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is responsible for the [Ontario Public Drug Programs](#) (OPDP) which pays for most of the costs of prescription drugs for people who qualify.
- Ontario hospitals coordinate the purchasing of drugs used in their facilities.
- Health Canada is responsible for ensuring a drug is safe and can be made available for sale Canada. Only when they have approved a drug can Ontario consider funding under the OPDP.