

ALERT: Urgent Need for Information on Community Antiviral Availability

November 21, 2017



Dear Pharmacy Colleagues;

Given the current state of hospital utilization, we are anticipating the seasonal influenza outbreak expected this winter may overwhelm existing hospital resources. For this reason, Peterborough Public Health, Peterborough Regional Health Centre and the Peterborough Family Health Team are working together to better coordinate the community response. Key to this is the promotion and provision of the influenza vaccine, which many of you are doing. We thank you for this, and encourage you to do your best to ensure that more people in Peterborough are protected against influenza through timely immunization.

The second part of our response is to ensure that persons who become ill with influenza, who are at risk of complications or severe disease, are able to access antivirals as soon as possible in the course of their illness. Data on effectiveness of antiviral treatment indicates a 63% reduction in hospitalizations in those using oseltamivir with laboratory confirmed influenza¹. For this reason, we are promoting to physicians the empirical prescribing of antivirals such as oseltamivir and zanamivir in their high risk patients.

This is where you come in. We would like to determine the size of our community antiviral stockpiles. Please answer the questions below and fax back your responses, one per pharmacy, as soon as possible:

1. With your current stock of oseltamivir (Tamiflu), how many patients would be able to receive a full treatment course of 5 days?

2. With your current stock of zanamivir (Relenza), how many patients would be able to receive a full treatment course of 5 days?

3. How long do you anticipate it would take to obtain more stock of oseltamivir?

4. How long do you anticipate it would take to obtain more stock of zanamivir?

Name of Pharmacy:

Contact Person:

Contact Information:

Fax to: 705-743-2897

This information will be anonymized, aggregated and shared with community partners for planning purposes only. For more information, please contact Peterborough Public Health at 705-743-1000, ext. 131.

1. Dobson J, Whitley RJ, Pocock S, Monto AS. Oseltamivir treatment for influenza in adults: a metaanalysis of randomised controlled trials. Lancet. 2015;385(9979):1729-37.

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