



CAMPAIGN
FOR PERSONAL
PRESCRIPTION
IMPORTATION

Newsletter: August 2019

WE NEED YOU! With drug prices in the news every day, now is the time to reach out to your elected officials and urge them to support personal prescription importation legislation.

Because of recent exciting developments – states pushing forward with legislation to import medicines from Canada and both the Food and Drug Administration and Health and Human Services recognizing that safe and affordable importation is possible – there is an urgent need to express your support **TODAY!**

Please visit our **Contact Congress** page to write an automated letter and encourage them to act! It takes less than five minutes but the impact will make a real difference!

Reach out to your elected official NOW <https://personalimportation.org/contact-congress/#/>

Question of the Month: How long have you been ordering your medications from Canada?

Email us your thoughts at info@personalimportation.org

[Please note that we will be posting and sharing your comments anonymously. If you do not want them to be made public, please let us know in your email.]

Highlighted Testimonial of the Month:

This month, we'd like to highlight a testimonial from our community – so that you know that you are not alone! Anibal Peixoto from Minneapolis, Minnesota shared the following:

My son and I have been ordering medications from Canada for approximately two years.

Our drug prescription plan coverage level is small compared to the full cost of the two medications we take. There are no "generic" equivalents.

The cost would be about US\$14,000 per year if we were unable to import from Canada. That would represent a severe impact on our family's budget and might even force us not to take the full dosage as prescribed, something that I learned can be very common due to the high cost.

Both of our conditions are perfectly under control and are non-life threatening. However, based on the information we have today, medication will be needed for the rest of our lives.

August 2019 Continued

Medications for life-threatening conditions cost much more in the US than our example.

In my personal opinion, the high cost of medication is a serious issue in America, particularly for individuals not working for a large employer or people who are unemployed.

Each medication would cost around \$530 to \$650 per month (after insurance preferred cost). Both medications have no "generic" form available.

The difference between the "street price" (full payment without insurance) and the "preferred price" is less than four percent.

I am employed by a large American company with a prescription plan that is considered "good". Others working for smaller companies would have a less inclusive prescription plan or (most common) no prescription coverage plan at all. This is my wife's situation (works for a large department store chain that provides no health benefits for store employees).

I save around 75% by purchasing in bulk from an online pharmacy in Canada. My son and I have been customers for two years, after the company I worked for (253,000 employees) was sold to another "smaller" company (55,000 employees) and the new prescription plan covered much less.

Thank you for sharing your story with us, Anibal! If you would like to share your story, please visit <https://personalimportation.org/tell-your-story/>.

Social Media Posts of the Month:

Facebook – July 4

The Food and Drug Administration is taking steps to help lower the cost of generic medications and we think this is promising news for Americans! The high cost of drugs is out of control and we need change NOW! <https://tinyurl.com/yxmqtz6>

Twitter – July 10

This CT Senator is spearheading a bill to target the high price of [#pharmaceuticals](#)
<https://tinyurl.com/y6j7fddg>

August 2019 Continued

From our blog:

FDA RECOGNIZES IMPORTATION AS SAFE AND FEASIBLE

July 31, 2019

Recently, the Food and Drug Administration released a “Safe Importation Action Plan” that outlines how to implement importation pathways in the U.S. to help Americans access safe and affordable medication.

The significance of this plan should not be underestimated since this is the first time that the FDA has clearly stated its intention to support efforts to import medications through a safe and secure regulatory pathway.

There are two options described in the Action Plan – Importation from Canada and importation from other countries. For states seeking to setup importation plans, this provides clear guidance on how they can approach ensuring that these medications are safely included in the U.S. drug supply chain.

This is a considerable development in the fight for importation and accessibility of affordable medications and we believe a very positive step forward.

The time to stand up and show your support has never been more urgent! Please reach out to your elected official and encourage their support by visiting our [Contact Congress](#) page TODAY!

Check out the full Action Plan [here](#).

OUR STATEMENT ON THE CARAVAN TO CANADA

July 29, 2019

This weekend, a ‘Caravan to Canada’ of diabetes patients and advocates traveled from Detroit, Michigan to Windsor, Ontario to access safe and affordable insulin. Presidential candidate Bernie Sanders (I-VT) – a long-time advocate for accessing medications from Canada – joined them for the trip.

The following statement is from Tracy Cooley, Executive Director of the Campaign for Personal Prescription Importation (CPPI):

August 2019 Continued

“This Caravan, and similar organized and individual road trips, demonstrate that safe daily health maintenance medications are available in Canada at dramatically lower prices. Although the Caravan will be going to a brick-and-mortar pharmacy, millions of Americans access their daily medications through licensed, legitimate online pharmacies in Canada.

“Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar recently recognized that both American and Canadian drug distribution systems are safe. Whether from a brick-and-mortar store or a licensed, legitimate online Canadian pharmacy, Americans should have access to life saving medicines through personal importation.

“As the cost of prescription drugs in the U.S. continues to skyrocket, personal prescription importation offers Americans an immediate and ongoing option for accessing safe and affordable prescription drugs. In fact, on average, Americans can save up to 80 percent on their prescription medications by buying them in Canada.”

Note: Insulin is temperature sensitive and is not sold online by safe Internet pharmacies, but can be purchased by individuals at Canadian pharmacies. However, several anti-diabetes medications can be purchased online as well as hundreds of other daily maintenance medications that Americans purchase from Canadian online pharmacies.

HHS RECOGNIZES THAT RX IMPORTATION IS SAFE

July 24, 2019

Recently, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar acknowledged publicly that both American and Canadian drug distribution systems are safe. Whether from a brick-and-mortar store or a licensed, legitimate online Canadian pharmacy, Americans should have access to life saving medicines through personal importation.

Politico reported his positive comments regarding importation calling them Azar’s ‘new view’ on importation. Interestingly, the HHS secretary called importation a ‘risky gimmick,’ just last year.

Azar stated that he changed his mind after talking to experts and reflecting on the issue. One reason he cited that is worth noting is the fact that the drug distribution channel has changed since the early 2000s.

Moving forward, Azar said that the agency is going to “marry the incredibly safe, American drug distribution system and the safe Canadian drug distribution system.”

The full Politico story can be accessed [here](#) (subscription required).

August 2019 Continued

WHO AND ONLINE ACCESS TO IMPORTED MEDICATIONS

July 8, 2019

Recently, PharmacyChecker.com submitted public comments to the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding Online Access to Imported Medications.

Although the U.S. is not considered a low-income country, many Americans struggle to afford medications.

As PharmacyChecker.com states:

Online access to safe and affordable imported medicine can improve and even saves lives of those who can't afford medicine where they live. This is particularly the case in the United States, where over 30 million people have no health insurance at all, and approximately 87 million are not adequately insured (Commonwealth Fund, 2019).

As part of this public comment period, twelve multilateral global health and development organizations are seeking public comments to help develop their "Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All."

PharmacyChecker.com goes on to state:

"...the Internet, via international online pharmacies, has helped tens of millions of Americans obtain medicines from pharmacies in other countries. In many of those cases, patients would otherwise not be able to obtain a prescribed medicine because price often determines access. In recognizing that price is an obstacle to access to medicines, Global Health Organizations can play a more constructive, forward-thinking role by promoting an open Internet through which regulated medicines can be purchased across borders both safely and at lower cost."

They also highlight the fact that the WHO has recognized previously the potential benefits of online pharmacies yet have not yet states the benefits of medicine affordability and access through prescription importation.

The human rights framework to promote online access to safe and affordable medicine can be found here: [Brussels Principles on the Sale of Medicines over the Internet](#).

More information on the Public Comment from PharmacyChecker.com can be found [here](#).

August 2019 Continued

CARAVAN TO CANADA

July 2, 2019

This weekend, a group of patient advocates and families traveled from Minnesota to Ontario Canada to access affordable insulin as the medication price has nearly doubled over the past four years.

Insulin is temperature sensitive, which can cause issues with shipping, but traveling to Canada to purchase the medications can yield tremendous cost savings. (Please note that some anti-diabetes medications can be purchased online, including diabeta, glucophage, and glucovance, among many others.)

In total, the group saved nearly \$22,000 in medication costs for their insulin. In the U.S., a vial costs approximately \$275 whereas in Canada patients only pay \$30 on average.

Studies have shown that one in four Americans are rationing their insulin because they can't afford it.

The group that hosted the caravan – T1 International – is a wonderful resource for the latest facts on the rising price of insulin and offers assistance in accessing affordable medication. Please visit their website at <https://www.t1international.com/usa/>

For more on the caravan and to read stories of people who have been affected by the outrageous cost of insulin in the U.S., please visit the following links for the latest news stories:

Check out this CBS News video: <https://tinyurl.com/y4n2m2aq>

Check out the story in Reuters: <https://tinyurl.com/yylf3ejg>

Check out the story from a local broadcast station in Canada: <https://tinyurl.com/yy955xen>

Please take a moment to reach out to your elected official to make sure that they do not lose sight of protecting the rights of all Americans to access safe and affordable prescription medication by visiting our Contact Congress page at <https://personalimportation.org/contact-congress>.

August 2019 Continued

Take Action – We would love to hear from you!

We are currently looking for personal stories to highlight the need for access to affordable and safe prescription medications to policy makers and thought leaders who can make a difference. Please share your story by visiting [this link](#).

About the Campaign for Personal Prescription Importation

<https://personalimportation.org>

The Campaign for Personal Prescription Importation (CPPI) is a national nonprofit patient advocacy organization that fights for Americans' access to safe, affordable prescription medications from Canada for personal use. Tens of millions of Americans – especially the elderly and others on fixed incomes – struggle to pay the extremely high price of prescription medications in the U.S. We are here to be their voice.

Millions of Americans use licensed Canadian pharmacies annually, to purchase their daily prescription medications at an affordable price. We believe that all Americans have a right to affordable medications. It is time to change the current U.S. policy on this issue to provide immediate access to life-saving medications, taken daily for chronic health conditions, at affordable prices.

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