



National Incident Data Repository Safety Brief

Nova Scotia Data

from community pharmacies

Reporting period: October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

6,301 reports received

Types of Incidents (including near misses) (Top 7)

Incorrect dose/frequency	1,395
Incorrect quantity	1,196
Incorrect drug	686
Incorrect prescriber	576
Incorrect strength/concentration	531
Incorrect duration of treatment	507
Incorrect patient	458

Levels of Harm

No error (e.g., near miss)	4,298
No harm	1,862
Mild harm	131
Moderate harm	6
Severe harm	3
Death	1

National Learning

Nova Scotia community pharmacies contribute to national learning and safety initiatives that incorporate learning from reported medication incidents and suggest system safeguards to prevent patient harm.

In Nova Scotia, the error type "incorrect patient" was reported in approximately 7% of incidents. These incidents included high-alert medications such as opioids, insulins, and anticoagulants.



These errors are preventable. The following are tips to improve patient safety:

SAFETY TIP: Regularly check that workspaces where medications are prepared are standardized, structured, orderly, and free of clutter.

SAFETY TIP: Request a second unique identifier (e.g., date of birth or address) from patients at prescription receipt and pickup, even for those individuals who are familiar to the pharmacy team.

SAFETY TIP: At pickup, open the bag containing the prescriptions and review the medications with the patient, ensuring that each prescription label bears the intended patient's name.



A key component of ISMP Canada data analysis is a review of the incident descriptions. The efforts by reporters to provide information that helps identify emerging issues and shared learning opportunities is gratefully acknowledged.

Additional safety recommendations can be found in ISMP Canada Safety Bulletins: <https://ismpcanada.ca/safety-bulletins/>

REPORT ✓ **LEARN** ✓ **ACT** ✓

More than 262,000 reports of medication incidents have been submitted to the National Incident Data Repository for Community Pharmacies (NIDR) from Nova Scotia since 2010.

Funding support provided by Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada. © 2024 ISMP Canada