

September 11, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

In May 2017, the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) supported the release of the [2017 Canadian Guideline for Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain](#) as a member of the Pan-Canadian Collaborative on Education for Improved Opioid Prescribing. Later that month the Minister of Health at that time, The Honourable Jane Philpott, called for a review of the guideline development process by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). The results of that review were released on Thursday, September 7th.

We are pleased to confirm that after an extensive assessment, CIHR found the process used to develop the opioid guideline was scientifically rigorous. Despite administrative errors in managing the conflict of interest declarations, the guideline is trustworthy.

The full [CIHR report](#) is available for review.

The guideline was developed to assist health care providers in practice decisions regarding the safe and effective use of opioids for chronic non-cancer pain management. It is a valuable tool to help keep patients safe from the potential harms of opioids while recognizing the therapeutic benefits of these medications.

The CFPC appreciates the Minister's steps to conduct the guideline review to confirm its credibility. The guideline development process was validated nationally and internationally and the resulting recommendations and guidance statements underwent multiple levels of review. We can reconfirm that the guidelines are based on the best available evidence and are appropriate to inform clinical practice.

The government review of the guideline development process reflects the increasing public interest in the role of the health care pharmaceutical industry and the importance of managing these relationships with rigour and transparency. The CFPC supports such efforts to ensure that guideline development and other initiatives are free of any potential conflicts of interest.

Along with our collaborative colleagues, we remain committed to addressing the opioid crisis that is affecting people across Canada every day.

Sincerely,

Francine Lemire, MD CM, CCFP, FCFP, CAE
Executive Director and CEO