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For Immediate Release

**Statement from the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA)  
Regarding Minister Ambrose's Announcement Regarding Shortages of Prescription Medicines**

**Toronto, February 10, 2015** – *The following is a statement from Jim Keon, President of the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA), regarding Federal Health Minister Rona Ambrose's announcement today with respect to shortages of prescription medicines in Canada.*

“Shortages of prescription medicines continue to be a concern in Canada and in jurisdictions around the world. Any disruption in supply and the resulting impact on patients, pharmacists and prescribers is of serious concern to the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA) and its member companies. The root causes of drug shortages are complex and are influenced by both domestic and global factors.

Member companies of CGPA currently report drug shortages on the [drugshortages.ca](http://drugshortages.ca) website and will comply with any new requirements resulting from today's announcement by Health Minister Rona Ambrose.

To date, CGPA and its members have taken an active leadership role with the governments, pharmaceutical distributors, pharmacists and physicians to lessen the impact of drug shortages on Canadian patients.

Since 2012, CGPA has worked with the brand-name drug industry to develop, create, fund and populate the website [drugshortages.ca](http://drugshortages.ca).

CGPA has also worked with government and other stakeholders through the the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee on Drug Shortages (MSSC). This Committee includes representatives of industry associations, federal, provincial and territorial governments, and health professional associations.

Through this Committee, a Multi-Stakeholder Toolkit has been created to define and clarify the roles and responsibilities of key players, and identify the tools and strategies available to address drug shortages at specific stages of the supply chain.

CGPA has also worked to develop a Protocol for the Notification and Communication of Drug Shortages by generic pharmaceutical manufacturers. The guidelines are designed to help preventing drug shortages whenever possible, notify stakeholders of current and anticipated drug shortages, and help manage specific shortages.

Reporting of drug shortages is aimed at mitigating the impact on patients, prescribers, pharmacists and others in the prescription drug supply chain, which is very important. Reporting drug shortages does not, however, prevent or stop drug shortages, or deal with the root causes of shortages.

This is why CGPA will continue to work with other stakeholders to address the root causes of drug shortages. These efforts include ongoing cooperation with federal and provincial governments, working with hospital purchasing groups to improve purchasing practices, working with Health Canada to ensure reasonable regulatory requirements, and CGPA's efforts to negotiate a sustainable pricing and reimbursement model for generic pharmaceuticals in Canada with the provincial and territorial governments.

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CGPA is also working to better educate policy makers and other stakeholders regarding the effect that purchasing strategies such as tendering schemes can have on the pharmaceutical supply chain by eliminating competition for prescription drugs and, therefore, leaving the supply chain more vulnerable.

These efforts continue but there will, unfortunately, continue to be shortages of prescription medicines in Canada and around the world for the foreseeable future until root causes are fully identified and addressed. When shortages occur, patients are encouraged to communicate closely with their physician and pharmacists to determine continued treatment or changes in treatment. Patients should renew their prescriptions with plenty of notice to allow pharmacists to re-fill their orders.”

#### **About the Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association**

The Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA) represents Canada’s generic pharmaceutical industry. The industry plays an important role in controlling health-care costs in Canada. Generic drugs are dispensed to fill 67 per cent of all prescriptions but account for only 23 percent of the \$23-billion Canadians spend annually on prescription medicines.

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