

PRESS RELEASE
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Care Beyond Cure: Management of Pain and Other Symptoms

**An important contribution by hospital pharmacists
for treating pain in terminally ill patients**

Montreal, February 3, 2009 – At its Professional Practice Conference yesterday, the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) hosted the launch of a new edition of the *Care Beyond Cure: Management of Pain and Other Symptoms* treatment guide. Developed voluntarily by the Quebec Hospital Pharmacists' Special Interest Group in Palliative Care, the guide is the only work in Canada that provides such in-depth theoretical and practical information on the use of pain relief medications at the end of life, and is intended to facilitate the work of professionals involved in the demanding care of terminally ill patients. A French edition of the treatment guide is also available.

"We're very pleased all our members will benefit from this guide, as well as other healthcare professionals with an interest in palliative care and, of course, the patients and their families. It's an exceptionally thorough source of information, and also a very practical tool," said CSHP president Richard Jones.

"This guide is the result of painstaking, detailed work by 34 hospital pharmacists and a number of palliative care physicians. It's a real gift to the healthcare community – a tool that can help people live through their suffering, so that they can end their days with the dignity they deserve," said Charles Fortier, president of the *Association des pharmaciens des établissements de santé du Québec*. "We should be very grateful to those who came up with the idea and developed it, and have so enthusiastically shared their knowledge and experience."

The therapeutic approach recommended by caregivers is to provide maximum pain relief along with constant concern for the patient's quality of life. This approach is based on establishing mutual trust between caregivers, the patient and their environment. Treatments involve a number of different medications in order to provide the substantial relief of suffering.

The guide examines a range of palliative care topics: pain (types and characteristics), the use of different classes of medications such as opioid and non-opioid analgesics, co-analgesics, modes of administration, physical and psychological symptoms related to the terminal phase and more.

Eleven new chapters

The new 543-page edition of the guide (which comes with a pocket reference version) reflects the advances in the science and understanding of palliative care in recent years. Eleven new chapters have been added, covering (among other things) medications for homecare, neuraxial administration of drugs (epidural and intrathecal), the pharmacist as apothecary (extemporaneous or "magistral" preparations created to meet a particular patient's needs), methadone, cancer-related anemia in palliative care, treatment of bleeding, fatigue and cachexia.

Care Beyond Cure: Management of Pain and Other Symptoms can be purchased from the Librairie Médicale & Scientifique at 450-464-3166. Price \$79.95. Publication of the guide was made possible by a generous contribution from the Sandoz Pharmaceutical Society.

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Source: Association des pharmaciens des établissements de santé du Québec
Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists

Information: France Bouffard
Sphère Communication
Telephone: 514-286-2772, extension 10
Cell: 514-718-4811