

Ontario Pharmacists' Association News Release - Communiqué

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS' ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES CEO (INTERIM)

(TORONTO, ON - June 14, 2007) - *Following the departure of CEO Marc Kealey, the Board of Directors of the Ontario Pharmacists' Association (OPA) announced today the appointment of Mr. Donnie Edwards as CEO (Interim). Mr. Edwards assumes this role after serving as the Association's Board Chair from May 2006 to June 2007.*

"The Board of Directors has confidence in Donnie Edwards to help lead the Association at this time as we proceed with a search for a permanent CEO," says Ken Burns, OPA's Vice Chair. "He will also provide continuity in the areas of government and stakeholder relations and advance the Board's strategic plan."

"I look forward to taking on this role, which takes effect June 20," says Donnie Edwards. "As CEO (Interim), I will continue to advance the mandate and efforts of the Board on behalf of membership and build on the momentum we have achieved over the past several years."

Mr. Edwards welcomes opinions from members on issues related to pharmacy and will continue to work closely with health care stakeholders to strengthen the role of the pharmacist.

OPA's Board of Directors has begun establishing a Search Committee to seek a permanent CEO. The Committee will seek a candidate who will continue to increase OPA's presence among stakeholders and execute the strategic plan set out by the Board of Directors.

Over the past four years, OPA's presence among government, health stakeholders, media and the public has increased considerably due, in large part, to the leadership of its former CEO, Mr. Marc Kealey and the direction of the Board of Directors.

OPA's Board of Directors would like to thank Mr. Kealey for his tireless efforts in establishing OPA as a major health stakeholder, a policy voice in numerous areas in the system and his dedication to promoting the role of pharmacists as front-line health care providers.

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Ontario Pharmacists'
Association

375 University Ave., Suite 800,
Toronto, ON M5G 2J5
Tel. (416) 441-0788
Fax (416) 441-0791
Toll free 1-877-341-0788
email mail@opatoday.com
www.opatoday.com

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Through Mr. Kealey's efforts, OPA has been recognized by the government as the lead voice for pharmacists representing a great opportunity for pharmacists to rewrite their role in health care. OPA now plays an essential role in the first ever Pharmacy Council in the province and helped to develop the first ever professional services program for the public – Meds Check.

In his tenure, he played a pivotal role in the relocation of OPA's office to University Avenue. The new headquarters are a reflection of the expanding role played by pharmacists in health care.

Mr. Kealey has also increased the public profile of the Association through hundreds of media interviews and speaking engagements locally, nationally and internationally.

Over the past several years, OPA membership has increased, membership services and corporate partnerships are on the rise and the flagship Drug Information and Research Centre is garnering unique opportunities for the Association and pharmacists.

"OPA enjoys a status like never before in areas that are making a huge difference for the profession and the public," says Edwards. "On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank Marc Kealey for helping to make the Association what it is today and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours."

The Ontario Pharmacists' Association is the professional association representing the views and interests and advocates for over 10,000 practicing pharmacists and pharmacists-in-training, in Canada's largest province.

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For more information, please contact:

Mary-Anne Cedrone

Manager of Communications

Tel: 416-441-0788 or 1-877-341-0788 ext- 4266

Email: mcedrone@opatoday.com



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375 University Ave., Suite 800,
Toronto, ON M5G 2J5
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