

# Canada Needs a Strategy for Appropriate Medication Use

Medications can help us in many different ways. However, **when medications are not used appropriately, they put Canadians at risk of harm:**



Medication harms include **falls, fractures, memory problems, car crashes, premature loss of independence, and death** (Brubacher et al. 2021; Halli-Tierney et al. 2019).



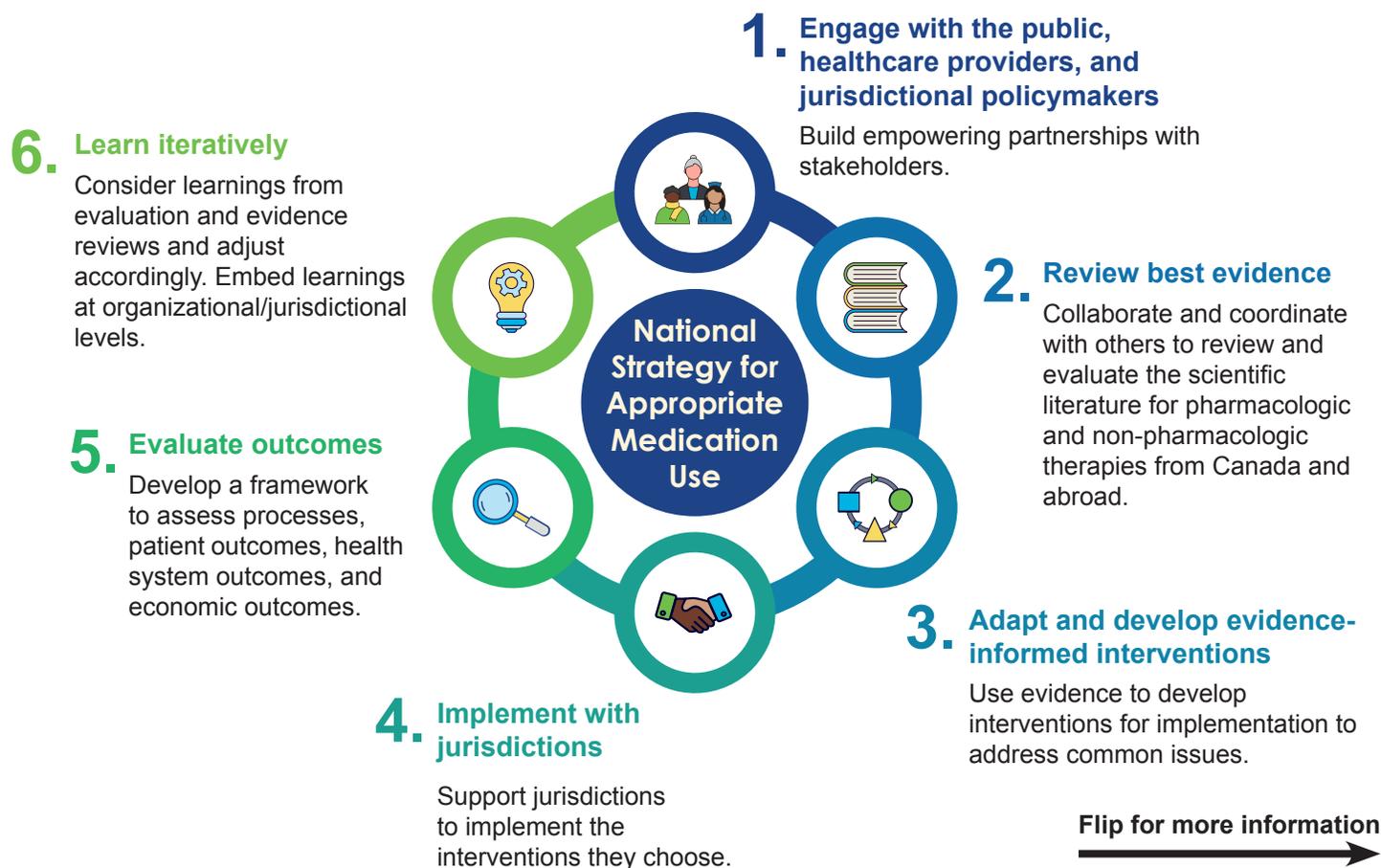
**Older adults, women, and people living in low-income neighbourhoods** are at greatest risk of medication harm (CIHI 2018).



**Nearly \$2B is spent yearly on potentially inappropriate medications and their consequences** in older adults (2013 estimate - Morgan et al. 2016).

## The Antidote: A 6-Step National Strategy for Appropriate Medication Use

Canada urgently needs a national strategy for appropriate medication use to reduce avoidable patient harm and health system costs. This strategy proposes a national organization to coordinate and support evidence-based interventions with and for jurisdictions. This would facilitate efficiency of resource use and increase the ability of jurisdictions to “do more with the same” in development of appropriateness strategies.



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## The Functions of a National Organization



### Engagement

- Public (including vulnerable and marginalized populations), health provider, jurisdictional policymaker, and other stakeholder engagement embedded in the organizational structure from the outset.
- Inclusive of a needs assessment and identification of potential priorities for development.
- Ongoing planned routine engagement to ensure currency and relevance of the work.

### Evidence-informed intervention creation

- Screening for national and international evidence to inform intervention development.
- Selection of initial priority areas and development of intervention programs to improve appropriate medication use, which may include non-pharmacologic therapies.
- Jurisdictions to select intervention(s) to implement and in which time frames; collaboration to adapt them to jurisdictional contexts.
- Ongoing development of additional intervention programs over time.

### Review of evidence and adaptation

- Evidence reviewed for new programs and updating of existing programs on a continuous basis as new data emerges.
- Evidence review to include research, real-world learnings, process and outcome data.
- Successful interventions adapted to other jurisdictions and integrated in a sustainable manner.

### Evaluation framework development; evaluation completion

- Evaluation framework identified as part of development of the intervention program that considers both processes and outcomes at patient, health system and jurisdictional levels.
- Collaborating and leveraging other established agencies, resources and links with experts and academics to conduct the evaluation.
- Evaluation of process and outcome results used for program improvement, which may include the range from minor modification for successful programs through to discontinuation for non-successful programs.

### Economic evaluation

- Development of a framework for rigorous and comprehensive economic evaluations.
- Evaluation inclusive of system level costs including direct costs of interventions (pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic), health system savings/costs.
- Evaluation also to consider costs of unintended consequences, and patient-level costs.
- Completion of evaluation leveraging other established agencies and resources.
- Development of recommendations for sustainability based on the evaluation(s).

### Research facilitation and integration

- Identify priority areas, link with researchers, and encourage research opportunities with other funders.
- Add to the literature through publication at different stages from description of interventions through implementation evaluation and outcomes.

### For more information or to contact our team



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