

## 10 health stories that mattered: June 7–13

- Roughly 20% of Canadian youths aged 12–17 are overweight or obese based on self-reported heights and weights, according to Statistics Canada. The rates for adults are 27.7% for women and 41.9% for men.
- The Canadian Medical Association released a report on end-of-life care based on town hall meetings held across the country. Recommendations include preparing advance care directives, increasing funding for palliative care and studying the potential impact of legalizing physician-assisted death.
- The odds of dying for patients admitted to hospital for urgent and unexpected problems are 4% higher on weekends than on weekdays, states a report by the Canadian Institute for Health Information. Urgent patients who undergo surgery are 7% more likely to die on weekends, states the report.
- Health Canada suspended the licence of Winnipeg-based drug wholesaler Canadadrugs.com because of “significant concerns” over manufacturing practices discovered during an inspection.
- There is growing concern over Canada’s high hysterectomy rate, reports the *Toronto Star*. More than 40 000 women had hysterectomies in 2012–13, but there is often another option, the CEO of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada told the *Star*.
- Canadian physicians lack sufficient knowledge about several areas of breastfeeding, including techniques, latching and milk supply, according to a paper by health workers at the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario. The paper recommends education to optimize the “knowledge, confidence, beliefs and attitudes of front-line physicians” to “increase breastfeeding exclusivity and duration and improve the health of our children.”
- Alberta Health Services should improve auditing of continuing care to remove redundancy and improve efficiency, recommends the Health Quality Council of Alberta. There is a lack of clarity about who is responsible for quality and safety management in continuing care, states the report.
- The health ministers of the Atlantic provinces met in Charlottetown to discuss how regional cooperation could help control rising health care costs. One proposal under consideration is bulk purchasing of generic drugs, which the ministers estimate would save the provinces \$400 million a year.
- Quebec hospitals are paying different prices for prescription drugs from the same manufacturers, reports the province’s auditor general. There are price differences of over 10% for nearly a third of the drugs, the report states, and the government hasn’t conducted a “systematic follow-up” to find the cause of the variation.
- GPS devices will be used to locate patients with cognitive impairment who have wandered off or are lost in Calgary and Grande Prairie, Alberta, in a six-month trial. More than 40 000 people in Alberta have some form of dementia, states Alberta Health Services, and 60% of seniors with dementia living in the community experience wandering. — Roger Collier, *CMAJ*

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