

## 10 health stories that mattered Aug. 11–15

- Canada is donating up to 1000 doses of its experimental Ebola vaccine to the World Health Organization for use in the West Africa outbreak that has now claimed about 1000 lives. The VSV-EBOV vaccine, which was developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada, has never been tested on humans.
- The Ontario Minister of Health and Long-term Care, Eric Hoskins, commends the province's ability to handle an Ebola outbreak after a man returning from Nigeria was suspected of having the virus. The man was isolated in a Brampton hospital before testing negative for Ebola.
- The federal government has asked three groups representing Canadian physicians to endorse a \$5-million, taxpayer-funded ad campaign warning about marijuana's health risks to young people. The Canadian Medical Association, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the College of Family Physicians of Canada were invited, but only the latter has so far signed on.
- According to a Statistics Canada survey, 16.5% of Canadian soldiers had symptoms of a major depressive episode, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder or alcohol abuse or dependence in 2013. About 6700 regular members and 1500 reservists were interviewed for the survey. Major depressive episode was the most commonly reported disorder (8%), followed by post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety (about 5% each).
- Health Canada has approved a plan by GlaxoSmithKline to fix water contamination problems at its Ste. Foy, Quebec, flu vaccine manufacturing plant. The US Food and Drug Administration issued GlaxoSmithKline a warning letter in the spring, and Health Canada identified seven major signs that production was not consistently meeting standards.
- Since 2009, as many as 256 transrectal ultrasound probes have been improperly disinfected in a Nova Scotia hospital. The hospital will notify patients.
- The drinking water ban has been mostly lifted following a dam failure that sent millions of cubic metres of waste water from the Mount Polley copper and gold mine into rivers and lakes about 600 kilometres northeast of Vancouver. Imperial Metals has started the clean-up.
- Former Canadian Food Inspection Agency scientist Klaus Nielson pleaded guilty to 11 charges related to his attempts to smuggle *Brucella* bacteria to China. Nielsen was arrested Oct. 24, 2012, when police found 17 vials of the pathogen in his luggage. Nielsen, a public servant, had been required to turn his research and patents over to the Canadian government, but he decided to do some illegal business selling a brucellosis diagnostic kit.
- Federal prison authorities are withholding relevant information into an investigation into drug-prescribing practices for inmates, says Correctional Investigator Howard Sapers. He launched his investigation in April when documents obtained by two media outlets showed that more than 60% of female inmates were being prescribed powerful antipsychotic drugs.
- Prince Edward Island's only full-time pain specialist is retiring next week after seven years. When Dr. Desmond Colohan opened his practice, there was a three-year wait for initial assessments. At its peak, the pain clinic managed about 500 patients. — Barbara Sibbald, *CMAJ*

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