

LETTERS

Opioid warning label

The 2017 Canadian “Guideline for Opioid Therapy and Chronic Noncancer Pain”¹ may be a helpful step in dealing with Canada’s opioid crisis, but additional policies also must be implemented. As a physician treating addiction, I feel that all prescriptions for opioids should have the following label attached: “THIS OPIOID MAY CAUSE ADDICTION.”

This label would compare with the warning labels provided on each cigarette package that is sold in Canada. These warning labels for cigarettes were opposed by the tobacco industry; I feel that the pharmaceutical industry and many pharmacists will oppose similar labelling.

However, Canada’s opioid crisis demands that a similar type of warning label be used.

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■ Cite as: *CMAJ* 2017 October 23;189:E1318.
doi: 10.1503/cmaj.733320

Reference

1. Busse JW, Craigie S, Juurlink DN, et al. Guideline for opioid therapy and chronic noncancer pain. *CMAJ* 2017;189:E659-66.

Competing interests: Melvin Herzog is a family physician involved mainly in treatment for opioid addiction in Toronto.