

Immunizer Profile: Nader Hammoud, Pharmacist



Calgary, Alberta

Mr. Hammoud administers a vaccine to a pharmacy client.

Nader Hammoud has been a licensed pharmacist for thirteen years, first in Lebanon and now in Canada. He has been a pharmacy manager for five years, now working in southwest Calgary.

He was drawn to study pharmacy by his early love of chemistry and pharmacology. As a pharmacist, Mr. Hammoud says that what brings him satisfaction in his work is helping patients to feel better, whether by preventing a side effect or by helping them to take their medications properly. He lists among his professional goals: to be more clinically involved in patient health; to pursue further professional development; and to use his knowledge to help patients with chronic disease management. To assist him with his work, he subscribes to the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion's newsletter, *CCIAP Bulletin*, and makes use of the Coalition's information and resources.

Mr. Hammoud has always believed that pharmacists should play a greater role in managing patient health. When he heard that pharmacists might be asked to help vaccinate during the 2009-2010 H1N1 pandemic, he immediately wanted to be part of this work. As a pharmacist in Lebanon, he was involved in the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines. He has always believed that pharmacists in Canada should be allowed to administer vaccines. In Canada, Nader has been immunizing for one year. "To do this work," he states, "one must have the will to learn, plus training in injection and first aid."

In Alberta, to be eligible to immunize, a pharmacist must be licensed on the clinical register, successfully complete a continuing education course (based on the Public Health Agency of Canada's Immunization Competencies), and possess valid certification in first aid and CPR (any level), which must be kept current for the duration of the authorization to immunize.

Mr. Hammoud sees that the pharmacy profession is changing, and says that he is "privileged to work with an excellent pharmacy management team, who saw the changes coming, encouraged us, and provided us with all the tools we would need to expand our role beyond checking prescriptions." He counsels that anyone considering pharmacy as a profession, or who is new to pharmacy, should not be afraid of change.

During the 2009-2010 influenza season, major challenges included scheduling assistance, and carrying out daily prescription filing duties and administering vaccines at the same time. Health care professionals and the public felt the difference pharmacists made during the H1N1 immunization campaign. Mr. Hammoud feels certain that pharmacists will be asked to help again during future influenza seasons and with future pandemic influenza prevention.



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