

LAW & POLICY GROUP

GRIST**CANADIAN ADVISORY PANEL RECOMMENDS
UNIVERSAL, SINGLE-PAYER PHARMACARE**

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Canada should implement universal, single-payer public pharmacare to replace the “current patchwork of thousands of private and public prescription plans,” which are “not sustainable,” the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare says in a new [report](#) on prescription drug coverage commissioned by the federal government last year. The plan would save employers on average more than CA\$750 annually per employee, the council says.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In its “A Prescription for Canada: Achieving Pharmacare for All,” the council recommends:

- The federal government work with provincial and territorial governments to establish a universal, single-payer public system of prescription drug coverage in Canada to ensure everyone has access to the drugs they need to maintain their physical and mental health.
- The establishment of a Canadian drug agency, which would develop an initial formulary of common, or so-called essential, medicines by 1 Jan 2022, which would expand to a fully comprehensive formulary by 1 Jan 2027
- The continued availability of private drug insurance as a form of supplementary insurance to national pharmacare

Canada is the only country with universal healthcare that doesn't provide universal coverage for prescription drugs. On a per capita basis, only the US and Switzerland spend more on medicines.

RELATED RESOURCES

- [Final Report of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare](#) (Health Canada, 12 Jun 2019)

- [Press Release](#) (Health Canada, 12 Jun 2019)

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