

NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL CONGRESS  
WINTER WEBINAR 2025

**PHARMA PHORECAST 2025:  
CHALLENGES HOME AND AWAY**

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of registrants to the 2025 Winter Webinar, and provides an overview of the Webinar

From global supply chain disruptions to stagflation to doctor shortages, the Canadian pharmaceutical industry faces a growing list of interconnected challenges, both at home and abroad.

How do these influences impact each other, and what are the ripple effects across the pharma sector?

In this White Paper, the National Pharmaceutical Congress Institute contacted pharma insiders to address some of the key areas of concern. These topics will be further discussed during the “Home and Away” themed National Pharmaceutical Congress Winter Webinar on February 12, 2025 from 11 a.m. to 12 noon ET.

## *Here's what they had to say on the global front...*

### **Why are Canadian pharmaceutical companies so vulnerable to supply chain disruptions?**

"Most pharmaceutical products are made outside of Canada," said Peter Benders, President & Managing Director of TO4 Group Inc., a company that assists start-ups and established companies in the life sciences sector navigate Canada's market landscape. "Therefore, the biggest issue for Canadians will be the ability to continue to import medicines. In addition, most APIs [active pharmaceutical ingredients] are produced in India and China. Any global restrictions on products from these countries will adversely affect the global supply chain. Canada's supply would be at risk."

Dr. Bettina Hamelin, President of Innovative Medicines Canada, echoed his concerns. "Global supply chain disruptions can delay product availability and increase costs," she said. "In addition, international pricing agreements, such as those within the pCPA [pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance] which aim to negotiate lower prices, can lead to longer approval times and reimbursement delays. Both these factors can discourage companies from launching new drugs in Canada."

Will Canadian start-ups be particularly vulnerable? According to Benders, this depends on the stage of the start-up. "If they are in a pre-commercial stage, as most start-ups are, supply isn't their issue. If the start-up is a new entry to Canada, it'll be an affiliate of a global company and supply will be managed."

**"Patients in most peer countries get access to approved new medicines over one year sooner than Canadians."**

**DR. BETTINA HAMELIN**  
PRESIDENT  
INNOVATIVE MEDICINES CANADA

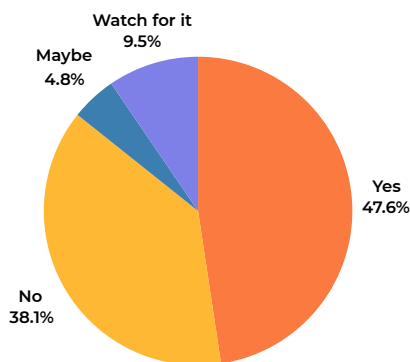


## Access to new medications: How does Canada compare to other countries?

“Patients in most peer countries get access to approved new medicines over one year sooner than Canadians,” Hamelin said, highlighting the significant strain this delay places on the healthcare system.

“Delays in accessing innovative treatments mean that Canadians may not receive the medicines they need when they need them,” she added. “This can contribute to disease progression, slower recovery, or prolonged suffering from conditions that could have been treated more effectively with newer therapies. Not only does this impact patients’ quality of life, these delays can also result in higher healthcare costs due to additional visits to family doctors or specialists, as well as more frequent hospitalizations.”

Have or will global trade barriers affect the pharmaceutical supply chain in Canada?



The majority (40%) of participants also **believed that geopolitical tension plays a large role** in creating supply chain vulnerabilities for Canadian pharma companies.

The NPC Institute surveyed Canadian pharmaceutical and healthcare executives to gather their thoughts regarding attitudes of pharma industry personnel toward emerging trends in the life sciences. (n=21)

## On the home front....

### What about that thing called ‘stagflation’?

Brian Bloom drew on his experience as Chairman and CEO of Bloom Burton & Co., to discuss the effects of inflation and economic stagnation on drug pricing and reimbursement policies. “While these factors exert pressure on all sectors, I quite frankly see the shrinking budgets of Canada’s federal and provincial government as a more pressing concern for the pharmaceutical industry,” he said.

According to Bloom, the primary issue lies in the mismanagement of the Canadian economy and how it lags behind the U.S. and other G7 nations. “We’ve overspent, leading to both global and domestic inflation. In my opinion, this has negatively impacted every industry in Canada, not just pharmaceuticals. However, the government will likely use it as a pretext to blame the industry and justify pulling back incentives that would otherwise improve Canadians’ access to better care.”

Similarly, Brenders pointed out that stagnation in drug pricing and reimbursement policies posed challenges for Canada’s pharmaceutical landscape.

“It is estimated that half of all new drug products are not launched in Canada due to the country’s complex pricing and market access environment,” he noted. “Increased pressure on pricing and inflation costs will challenge Canada’s attractiveness for new innovation introductions.”

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**PETER BRENTERS**  
FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
TO4 GROUP INC..



## Can private clinics address Canada’s physician shortage?

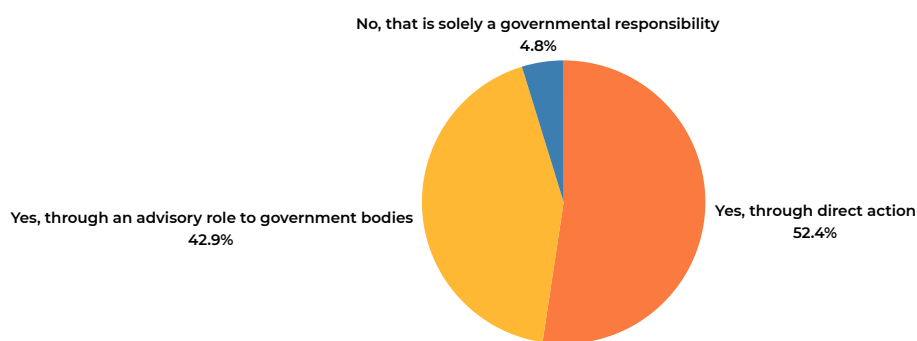
For Bloom, the current physician shortage—exacerbated by the government’s economic mismanagement—has significantly increased the demand for private clinics.

"From my perspective as a capital market investor, we’re seeing heightened interest from private equity firms looking to enter this space to support new businesses or expand existing ones."

While many Canadians are frustrated with the shortage of doctors, the push for private care is not necessarily a patient-driven phenomenon, he added. "I don’t think the average Canadian is aware of the complexities of the issue. Those who privately own clinics or healthcare infrastructure—such as labs or specialty clinics—will still be reimbursed by the government. The key difference is that these facilities will operate as non-unionized, and in some cases, for-profit entities."

Ultimately, Canada’s healthcare system requires a greater number of privately managed clinics. "Just as we have privately owned dental and optometry practices, we’re going to see more specialty clinics operating independently from government staffing models or non-profit affiliations. While still covered by government funding, these clinics will function within a profit-seeking framework," he noted.

Does industry have a role to work to overcome barriers to medication access encountered by Canadians living in remote and rural communities?



The NPC Institute surveyed Canadian pharmaceutical and healthcare executives to gather their thoughts regarding attitudes of pharma industry personnel toward emerging trends in the life sciences. (n=21)

## Telemedicine and pharmacare to the rescue?

As Brenders sees it, both represent significant advancements for patient care.

“Telemedicine allows for more efficient access to primary care and triage services, especially for people living in remote areas and removing the need to travel long distances,” he said.

“Additionally, the rise of home delivery of medications ensures timely and efficient access to essential treatments.”

“The expansion of pharmacare to more underserved populations will undoubtedly benefit healthcare,” he added. However, he noted that shifting from provincial pharmacare programs to a national model with less coverage could have a potentially regressive impact.

Like Brenders, Hamelin raised concerns about the practical challenges of implementing a national pharmacare model that could effectively serve all Canadians.

“Every Canadian should have access to the medicines they need, when they need them,” she said. “Our current dual system of private and public drug coverage means that over 97 per cent of Canadians are eligible for drug coverage.”

However, she cautioned that the federal government’s proposed pharmacare model would put Canadians’ existing drug coverage at risk, potentially reducing access to new medications and treatments.

Her proposed solution? “We should build on the strengths of our dual system, while addressing residual gaps in coverage.”

**“Just as we have privately owned dental and optometry practices, we’re going to see more specialty clinics operating independently from government staffing models or non-profit affiliations. While still covered by government funding, these clinics will function within a profit-seeking framework.”**

**BRIAN BLOOM**  
CO-FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN AND CEO  
BLOOM BURTON & CO.



## In conclusion: How can Canadian brand-name pharma companies sustain robust R&D investments amidst evolving global and domestic challenges?

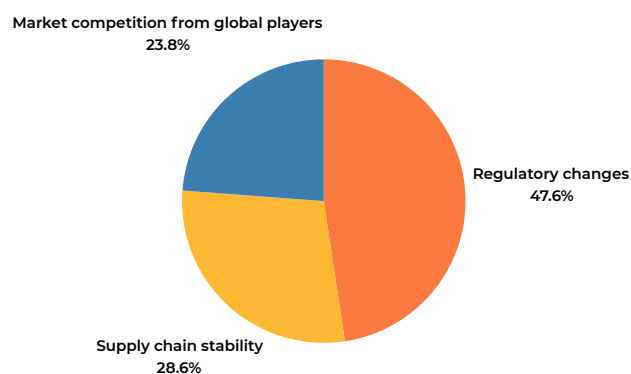
For Hamelin, this is a complex issue, as the pharmaceutical ecosystem is deeply interconnected with R&D investments.

“Attracting global investment requires positioning Canada as a premier destination for pharmaceutical innovation,” she said. “Accelerating the adoption of innovative medicines is essential in achieving this, as it signals that Canada is a progressive and competitive market. Canada’s world-renowned research centres, academic institutions, and highly skilled workforce further enhance the country’s appeal to pharmaceutical companies looking to invest in R&D.”

Bloom couldn’t agree more and emphasized the urgent need for the government to expand access to innovative medicines and reimburse them as quickly as possible.

“The current reimbursement model signals our government’s reluctance to provide Canadians with world class treatments because they don’t want to pay for them,” he said. “However, every dollar spent on a clinically proven, effective therapy can lead to significant cost savings elsewhere in the healthcare system. While it is easy to criticize pharmaceutical companies, the reality is that they are developing and delivering life-saving medicines.”

What is the most pressing issue for Canada’s pharmaceutical industry in the next five years?



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NPC Institute 2025 Winter Webinar

# **Pharma Phorecast 2025:** Challenges Home and Away

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February 12, 2025

11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. ET



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# 2025 Winter Webinar Faculty



**BRIAN BLOOM**  
CO-FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN AND CEO  
BLOOM BURTON & CO.

Brian Bloom is a co-founder of Bloom Burton & Co. and serves as the firm's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. By forging unique relationships with international healthcare-specialized investors, Brian raises capital for healthcare companies while helping investors realize returns.

Brian serves on the Board of Directors of Satellos Bioscience and Appili Therapeutics. Brian was formerly the Chairman of the Board of Grey Wolf Animal Health and Triumvira Immunologics, a member of the Life Sciences Advisory Board at the National Research Council of Canada, the Dean's Advisory Board at McMaster University and on the Board of Directors of BIOTECanada, the Baycrest Foundation and Qing Bile Therapeutics.

Before co-founding Bloom Burton in 2008, Brian spent six years at an independent investment dealer in the healthcare and biotechnology institutional sales and equity research groups. Brian started his career at New York-based investment banking firms SCO Financial Group and Molecular Securities. Brian received an Honours Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry from McMaster University and subsequently studied at the Mount Sinai Graduate School for Biological Sciences of New York University, with a focus in molecular endocrinology and biophysics.

Brian is the proud recipient of the McMaster University 2017 Distinguished Alumni Award in Science and the co-recipient of the 2023 Life Sciences Ontario Community Service Award. In 2023, Bloom Burton celebrated its 15-year anniversary with an Ecosystem Builder Award from BIOTECanada.



**PETER BRENDERS**

FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR  
TO4 GROUP INC.

Peter is the Founder and Managing Director of TO4 Group Inc., where he helps start-ups and established companies in the life sciences sector commercialize innovations in Canada. With over three decades of experience, Peter has held leadership roles across government, for-profit, and not-for-profit sectors, including President and CEO of BIOTECanada, General Manager of Sanofi Genzyme, Founder and CEO of Inagene Diagnostics, and CEO of the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation. Most recently, as General Manager of BeiGene Canada, Peter built out the affiliate from start-up and grew its business to \$100 million in sales within three years, achieving the status of #1 worldwide affiliate in product per capita demand. Peter has a proven track record of leading businesses through complex challenges, launching over 20 successful products, and driving growth across various therapeutic areas. Peter advocates for systemic improvements in healthcare access and emphasizes the importance of aligning stakeholders to create patient-centered solutions. In addition to his corporate roles, he actively contributes to the life sciences community through board roles and advisory positions. He is a proud inductee of the Canadian Healthcare Marketing Hall of Fame. Peter holds an MBA in Health Services Management from McMaster University, an honours BSc from Western, and has completed executive education programs at Stanford, Harvard, McGill, and Queen's University.



**DR. BETTINA HAMELIN**  
PRESIDENT  
INNOVATIVE MEDICINES CANADA (IMC)

Dr. Bettina Hamelin, PharmD, EMBA, is a globally renowned researcher and esteemed life sciences executive, who brings over 30 years of experience in academia, industry, and not-for-profit organizations to her current role as President of Innovative Medicines Canada (IMC).

In this role, Dr. Hamelin is dedicated to enhancing access to innovative medicines for Canadians, while advancing Canada's position as an attractive destination for life sciences investments, high-value jobs, and new clinical trials. Driven by her unwavering commitment to improving the health and well-being of all Canadians, Dr. Hamelin firmly believes collaboration and partnership are essential to the future of healthcare innovation in Canada. Having acquired an Executive MBA in Healthcare from the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia, she is uniquely positioned to work alongside health system stakeholders to find novel solutions to complex challenges.

Prior to joining IMC, Dr. Hamelin was the President and CEO of Ontario Genomics for over six transformative years. Here, she not only established the organization as Canada's preeminent force in engineering biology on the world stage, but also cultivated an ecosystem that was conducive to the development and commercialization of cutting-edge Canadian innovations.

Dr. Hamelin's illustrious career includes serving as the Vice-President of Research Partnerships at the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), where she led a 130-member team to spearhead a robust research and innovation investment strategy. She also held pivotal leadership roles at BioChem Pharma and Pfizer Inc., pioneering novel public-private partnership models that propelled research and innovation forward, and was a tenured professor at Université Laval.

Dr. Hamelin is fluently trilingual and holds a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Kentucky.

With her wealth of expertise, purpose-driven leadership, and passion for driving positive change in the pharmaceutical, health, and life sciences sectors, Dr. Hamelin stands as a trusted leader, poised to make enduring contributions to the health of Canadians and the vibrancy of Canada's research and innovation ecosystems.

Since 2006, the National Pharmaceutical Congress (NPC) has provided a world-class stage for Canada's thought leaders in the pharmaceutical industry. The NPC Institute seeks to facilitate open dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders such as industry representatives, government officials, and healthcare providers to identify and recommend potential solutions to address challenges and promote sustainable growth and innovation in the life sciences sector.

For more information on the NPC Institute, please get in touch with us at [health@chronicle.org](mailto:health@chronicle.org) or visit [pharmacongress.info](http://pharmacongress.info).



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Reporter: Diane Bracuk  
Special thanks to: Joe Knott

# 2025 Winter Webinar Agenda

September 11, 2024

*\*all times noted are in ET*

11:00 AM	WELCOME	BEN PARRY & MITCH SHANNON
11:10 AM	PANELIST INTRODUCTIONS & PRESENTATIONS	BRIAN BLOOM, PETER BRENDERS, & DR. BETTINA HAMELIN
11:35 AM	<b>INNOVATIVE SPOTLIGHT BREAK</b>	
11:40 AM	LIVE PANEL DISCUSSION	
11:55 AM	CONCLUSION	BEN PARRY & MITCH SHANNON

Join your colleagues virtually on **Wednesday, February 12, 2024** from **11 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET** where these Life Science industry leaders will discuss the "Pharma Phorecast 2025: Challenges Home and Away."

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**Click [here](#) to register today.** Post-meeting materials will be available to registered delegates only.

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