
ABC Life Literacy Canada engages Canadians to increase their health literacy with *ABC Health Matters*

(Toronto, ON – June 7, 2017) – ABC Life Literacy Canada (ABC) is proud to announce the second year of *ABC Health Matters*, a health literacy program developed to help Canadians increase their confidence when talking about and making decisions regarding health issues with family, friends, and health care professionals. With the support of AbbVie Corporation and McKesson Canada, and through delivery partner University Health Network (UHN), *ABC Health Matters* will reach patient groups with this health care provider-led program. The ambition of *ABC Health Matters* is to create a healthier and more confident Canada by increasing the health literacy of all Canadians.

“ABC is pleased to launch the second year of *ABC Health Matters* to help Canadians build their confidence and knowledge to navigate the health care system,” said Mack Rogers, Executive Director, ABC Life Literacy Canada. “With the support of AbbVie, McKesson, and delivery partner UHN, we are helping learners to be more comfortable talking about their health and to become advocates for themselves and their family to make informed decisions about their health care for an improved quality of life.”

An alarming 60 percent of adults and 88 percent of seniors have low health literacy (Public Health Agency of Canada). Our ability to thrive—as individuals, families, communities, and as a country—relies on good health, yet those with low health literacy are more likely to be sick, ill, or injured and have difficulty understanding and following a treatment plan. *ABC Health Matters* targets adults who struggle to manage their health and arms them with the knowledge to better access health care to live a more healthy life.

The program was piloted across Ontario last year to adult literacy programs with very positive results. Learners reported an increase in confidence to manage their own health and the health of those they care for and an increase in knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as a patient. Ninety-three percent of participants indicated they intended to be more proactive about their health and intend to ask more questions of their health care professionals going forward.

“We are very excited to continue our partnership with ABC and evolve our workshops to be leveraged in hospitals. We strongly believe that improving health literacy is vital to a healthier Canada. It is through supporting such initiatives as *ABC Health Matters* that we are taking a step forward in making a positive impact in healthcare sustainability,” said Stéphane Lassignardie, General Manager, AbbVie.

ABC Health Matters program includes two workbooks, which are delivered in two, two-hour workshops. The workbooks can also be downloaded for free from our website for use at home by learners. The first workbook includes information such as how to talk about your health with your family and with your health care provider and includes practice activities and helpful sample scripts. The second workbook

includes information specific to the Ontario health care system and UHN network with details about services from your local pharmacist and doctor, Telehealth, and how to create a medical history card.

“Increasing the health literacy of patients makes them full partners in their care. *ABC Health Matters* is an innovative example that demonstrates how pharmacists can be a key resource in health literacy and how active participation can increase positive outcomes and improve adherence for individuals, families and communities. McKesson Canada is proud to continue to partner with *ABC Health Matters* to support this important initiative,” said Paula Keays, President, McKesson Canada.

ABC Health Matters will be delivered at three UHN locations across Toronto in workshops held during May and June. Led by McKesson pharmacist volunteers and the UHN health care team, the program will reach 150 patient-learners as well as learners across Canada accessing the program through self-led delivery. To register for a workshop or download the program workbooks for free, visit ABCHealthMatters.ca.

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About ABC Life Literacy Canada

ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that inspires Canadians to increase their literacy and essential skills. We mobilize business, government and communities to support lifelong learning and achieve our goals through leadership in programs, communications and partnerships. We envision a Canada where everyone has the skills they need to live a fully engaged life. For the latest news and information on adult literacy please visit www.abclifeliteracy.ca. Follow us on Twitter (@abclifeliteracy). For more information about *ABC Health Matters* visit ABCHealthMatters.ca.

About AbbVie Corporation

AbbVie is a global, research-based biopharmaceutical company formed in 2013 following separation from Abbott Laboratories. The company's mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to develop and market advanced therapies that address some of the world's most complex and serious diseases. Together with its wholly-owned subsidiary, Pharcyclics, AbbVie employs more than 29,000 people worldwide and markets medicines in more than 170 countries. For more information: www.abbvie.ca on Twitter at @abbviecanada.

About McKesson Canada

Founded more than 100 years ago, McKesson Canada is dedicated to delivering vital medicines, supplies and information technologies that enable the healthcare industry to provide patients better, safer care. Our solutions empower pharmacies, manufacturers, hospitals and other healthcare institutions by enabling them to get closer to the millions of patients they serve every single day, while contributing to the quality and safety of care in Canada. For more information, visit www.mckesson.ca.

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