

## 10 health stories that mattered: Mar. 23–27

- Exaggerated health claims were among the top advertising complaints in 2013, reports Advertising Standards Canada. There was a particularly large increase in complaints about online ads for complementary and alternative medicine providers.
- A Saskatchewan man suspected of having contracted Ebola in West Africa does not in fact have the virus, according to the Public Health Agency of Canada. Lassa, Marburg and Crimean Congo viruses have also been ruled out. Tests continue in an attempt to diagnose the man's illness.
- A framework to prevent and control tuberculosis in Canada has been released by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The framework focuses on addressing the disease in the two populations at highest risk: Aboriginal peoples and those born in countries with high rates of tuberculosis.
- Restricting duty hours for surgical residents has not improved their well-being and has a negative effect on their certification exam performance, as well as on patient outcomes, according to an *Annals of Surgery* systematic review of 135 articles led by Ontario trauma surgeon Dr. Najma Ahmed. "Greater flexibility to accommodate resident training needs is required," the paper concludes. "Further erosion of training time should be considered with great caution."
- Manipulative over billing tactics are being used by private health clinics in Ontario, charges the Ontario Health Coalition. User fees ranging from \$50–\$3500 or more were charged by 135 private clinics and hospitals, states the report.
- Reduced effectiveness warnings related to weight will soon appear on packaging for emergency contraceptive pills. Health Canada has requested that packaging indicate the pills are less effective in women who weigh 74–79 kg and not effective in women over 79 kg.
- Many physicians don't want to be "medical-marijuana gatekeepers" because of concerns such as a lack of safety evidence and fears that recreational users will masquerade as patients, reports *The Globe and Mail*. Only 7% of doctors (and 14% of family doctors) support providing authorizations to purchase medical cannabis, according to "Health Canada figures crunched for *The Globe and Mail*."
- Nearly 30 000 ounces of donated breast milk were dispensed in Ontario hospitals to about 500 vulnerable newborns and infants since the Rogers Hixon Ontario Human Milk Bank opened a year ago, states the province's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The government is providing \$1.2 million over six years to support the milk bank.
- Surgical wait times are dropping in Saskatchewan, where just over 80% of patients undergoing surgery between Nov. 1, 2013, and Jan. 31, 2014, waited less than three months, the goal set by the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative. That is a reduction of 10 755 patients waiting three months since the initiative began in March 2010.
- A new federally funded course will soon be available to help doctors identify and treat post-traumatic stress disorder, reports *The Globe and Mail*. "Family physicians do not have the tools or the time, in a lot of cases, to deal with it — or even to diagnose it," Richard Chenier, project manager for the Mood Disorders Society, told *The Globe*.  
— Roger Collier, *CMAJ*

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