## Results

### Dispensing Volume

- **4059** Ontario pharmacies processed an ODB claim in the 13/14 fiscal year, of which, 0.34% (501,905/1,499,974) were THCD prescriptions.
- **87.3%** of all THCD prescriptions were dispensed by community pharmacies.

### Dispensing Frequency

- Each cancer pharmacy dispensed on average **123** THCD prescriptions per week (range 52-219).
- Each community pharmacy dispensed on average **2** THCD prescriptions per week.

### Dispensing Cost

- **Hormonal therapy** accounted for the majority of THCD claims (64.3%).
- **Chemotherapy** accounted for the majority of government costs for THCD claims (36.2%).

### Estimated Average Weekly Prescription Volume for THCD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pharmacy Type</th>
<th>ALL THCDs</th>
<th>Chemotherapy</th>
<th>Hormonal</th>
<th>Supportive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Pharmacy (n=6)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Pharmacy (n=41)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Pharmacy (n=4008)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Government Costs vs. Number of Claims for THCD

- **2%** of THCD claims accounted for the majority of government costs (5.1% of total government spending).

## Discussion

- Overall, community pharmacies predominately dispensed the selected THCD. The low number of cancer pharmacies across the 14 LHINs in Ontario may explain this finding. 5/14 LHINs had a cancer pharmacy. In comparison, the average number of community pharmacies per LHIN was 286 (range, 72-524).
- Our estimate of two THCD prescriptions/week/community pharmacy is consistent with Abbott et al.’s findings in their national survey of community pharmacists and oral anticancer therapy. In this survey, approximately 70% of community pharmacies dispensed on average zero to five prescriptions/week.
- Overall weekly THCD dispensing frequency appears to be the highest in cancer pharmacies followed by hospital and community pharmacies. This trend may suggest that convenience and access to specialized staff or integrated care drive the patient’s choice.
- In community pharmacies, hormonal therapy had the highest frequency of dispensing compared to other types of THCD. Reactions may include hormonal therapies to be lower cost, require less stringent handling precautions, and less patient monitoring.
- Within each LHIN, dispensing rates by pharmacy type are likely heterogeneous. A further analysis of pharmacy level data is required to confirm trends observed in this initial analysis.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Drug Program Services Unit at Ontario Public Drug Programs.