

PHARMACY QI

Practical Tips for Quality Improvement

August 2015

EVOLVING ROLES IN INTERPROFESSIONAL CARE: FOCUS ON PHARMACISTS

Over the past several years, a number of health professionals have seen their scope of practice expand, offering an opportunity to consider innovative strategies for providing collaborative patient care that has the potential to improve the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency associated with current practices.

Many provinces have increased the scope of practice of pharmacists. In some cases, pharmacists must receive extra training before they can engage in expanded scope activities. Optimal care of residents/patients is achieved when the health team works collaboratively, with each profession utilizing its full scope of practice. For pharmacists, this may be associated with professional activities such as adapting prescriptions to meet specific resident circumstances (e.g., dosage form, formulation, dose), substituting a therapy within the same class of medications with one that is more appropriate for the resident, and ordering and interpreting laboratory tests.

The table below outlines the status of pharmacist expanded scope services by province as of June 2015.

Pharmacists' Expanded Scope of Practice in Canada					
Expanded Scope	Province				
	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON
Provide emergency prescription refills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Renew/extend prescriptions	✓	✓	✓	✓ ⁴	✓
Change drug dosage/formulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Make therapeutic substitution	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Prescribe for minor ailments/conditions	X	✓ ¹	✓	✓	X
Initiate prescription drug therapy	X	✓	✓ ²	✓	✓ ⁵
Order and interpret laboratory tests	X	✓	P	✓	P
Administer a drug by injection	✓	✓	P ³	✓	✓ ⁶

Key: ✓ = Implemented in jurisdiction P = Pending legislation, regulation or policy X = Not implemented

1. Pharmacists in Alberta who have "additional prescribing authority" can prescribe a Schedule F drug (prescription-only), including those for the treatment of minor ailments.
2. In Saskatchewan, initiation of prescription drug therapy can only be conducted as part of assessment and prescribing for minor ailments.
3. Saskatchewan legislation has been introduced and is expected to be implemented by the fall of 2015.
4. In Manitoba, as Continued Care Prescriptions under section 122 of the Regulations to the Pharmaceutical Act.
5. In Ontario, prescribing is restricted to specified drug products for the purpose of smoking cessation.
6. In Ontario, injection is limited to administration of influenza vaccination to patients five years of age and older.

Table adapted from: Canadian Pharmacists Association. Pharmacists' Expanded Scope of Practice in Canada. Updated June 2015. Available at http://199.103.61.199/docs/resource-items/expandedscopechart_june2015_en.pdf. Accessed July 14, 2015.