

Pharmacists' Scope of Practice in Canadian Jurisdictions

Table One: Pan-Canadian Overview, Effective November 2022

	Prescribing in the absence of an existing prescription				Prescribing when there is an existing prescription			Administer: includes parenteral and non-parenteral	Tests		
	Initiate a prescription	Initiate a Rx under delegation/collective Rx	Initiate a Rx for specified conditions/circumstances	Prescribe in emergency circumstances	Adapt: change dose, formulation, regimen, duration, route	Therapeutic substitution	Renew/continue a Rx for continuing care		Order lab tests	Perform tests	Interpret tests
AB	✓ ¹	✓ ¹	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ^{1,3}	✓	✓	✓
BC			✓		✓ ³	✓ ³	✓ ³	✓ ^{1,3}			✓
CF	✓ ^{4,5}	✓ ⁵	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓ ⁵		✓ ⁵
MB	✓ ^{1,3,4}		✓ ¹	✓ ³	✓	✓ ⁶	✓ ³	✓ ^{1,3}	✓ ^{1,3,7}	✓ ³	✓ ^{1,3,7}
NB	✓ ⁴		✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ^{1,3}	P	✓ ³	✓
NL			✓ ¹		✓ ¹	✓ ¹	✓ ¹	✓ ^{1,3}		✓ ³	✓ ³
NS	✓ ⁴		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ^{1,3}	✓	✓ ³	✓
NT							✓ ³				
NU											
ON		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓ ^{1,3}		✓ ³	✓ ³
PE			✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ^{1,3}	✓ ⁶	✓ ³	✓ ³
QC	✓ ⁴	✓	✓	✓ ³	✓	✓ ³	✓	✓ ^{1,3}	✓		✓
SK	✓ ^{2,4}		✓ ²	✓	✓ ³	✓ ^{2,4}	✓	✓ ^{1,3}	✓ ⁶	✓ ³	✓ ³
YT			✓ ¹		✓	✓	✓ ³	✓ ^{1,3}			✓

KEY

✓ Established in legislation and regulation or DND policy

P Pending – Legal authorization received, but infrastructure/framework required to fully implement this activity not yet in place

1 Additional formal training/authorization from regulator required

2 Additional formal training/authorization from regulator required in certain circumstances only

3 Further limitations on types/classes of medication, patient groups or circumstances exist

4 Activity can only be conducted within the terms of a formal collaborative practice agreement or approved collaborative setting/environment

5 Under delegation for the Canadian Armed Forces (CF) Health Services

6 Hospital practice only

7 Currently being phased-in

Rx Prescription

Note: This chart is a summary only for the purpose of comparing jurisdictions and is not meant to replace provincial/territorial-specific information. Pharmacy professionals are expected to consult all relevant jurisdictional laws, regulations, standards and other rules and requirements related to scope of practice in their particular jurisdiction.

Note: This chart outlines the scope of practice for pharmacists when providing care for human patients. Readers are referred to provincial/territorial legislation for more information on the scope of practice when providing care for animal patients.

Pharmacists' Scope of Practice in Canadian Jurisdictions

Table Two: Definitions used to describe the pharmacist scope of practice

*Note: Authorized prescriber includes any regulated health professional who is authorized to prescribe and is practising within their professional scope of practice.

Group	Category	Term and Definition
Prescribing in the absence of an existing prescription		Prescribing that is based on assessment of the patient's condition and judgment by the pharmacist. The pharmacist is not in possession of an original prescription from an authorized prescriber. The pharmacist is responsible for decisions about the clinical management including prescribing a drug, but ensures collaboration with the patient's other healthcare providers. The pharmacist has met and practises in accordance with the requirements set by the pharmacy regulatory authority (PRA). Requirements may include but are not limited to registration with the PRA for additional prescribing authorization or prescribing in a collaborative practice or prescribing for specified conditions/circumstances, etc.
	Initiate a prescription	Generating a new prescription for a prescription drug where the pharmacist is responsible for the assessment of patients and the decisions made about the drug and the clinical management required. Prescribing authority may be restricted by the pharmacist's specialty and competency, but not to specific medical conditions/circumstances outlined in legislation or PRA standards/directives/guidelines. While it is always expected that pharmacists will only prescribe within a collaborative practice relationship/environment, a formal written agreement or approval of the practice environment/setting by the PRA is only required when indicated with a footnote.
	Initiate a prescription under delegation/collective Rx	The pharmacist is authorized to generate a new prescription for a prescription drug only through delegation or in accordance with a collective prescription. The delegation/collective prescription provides the pharmacist with authorization to prescribe according to the conditions of the delegation/collective prescription, but this activity is not considered part of the independent scope of practice of the pharmacist.
	Initiate a prescription for specified conditions/circumstances	Generating a new prescription for a prescription drug for medical conditions or circumstances which have been approved by the PRA and are outlined in legislation or PRA standards/directives/guidelines. These may include but are not limited to emergency contraception, smoking cessation, minor/common ailments, self-diagnosed conditions, previously diagnosed conditions, conditions that do not require a diagnosis, preventative diseases.
	Prescribe in emergency circumstances	Prescribing a prescription drug, in the absence of an existing prescription, when there is an immediate need for drug therapy and in the professional judgment of the pharmacist, it is not reasonable for the patient to seek emergency health care elsewhere and there is a risk to the patient's health if immediate treatment is not provided (e.g., asthma attack).
Prescribing where there is an existing prescription (e.g., Rx on file in the pharmacy for renewals)		Prescribing for the purpose of optimizing care or continuing care based on assessment of the patient and judgment by the pharmacist. The pharmacist is responsible for the prescribing, but ensures collaboration with the patient's primary and other healthcare providers. The pharmacist has met and practices in accordance with the requirements set by the PRA.
	Adapt a prescription	Modifying or altering an existing prescription with respect to the dose, formulation/dosage form, dosage regimen, route of administration, or duration to optimize therapy.
	Therapeutic substitution	Substituting a prescribed drug with a different chemical entity that has or is expected to have an equivalent therapeutic effect.
	Renew/continue a prescription for continuing care	Prescribing a prescription drug that has been previously prescribed for the purpose of continuing therapy based on assessment of the patient and judgment by the pharmacist.
Administer		Administering a drug (substance) by parenteral or non-parenteral routes of administration.
Tests	Order lab tests	Ordering a laboratory analysis within the practice of pharmacy.
	Perform tests	Performing a laboratory test or point of care test (POCT) within the practice of pharmacy.
	Interpret tests	Interpreting test results within the practice of pharmacy.
1 Additional formal training/ authorization from regulator required		The pharmacist is required by the PRA to undergo and demonstrate completion of a training program approved by the PRA and/or must receive additional authorization from the PRA prior to undertaking these activities. This could include additional requirements for approved injection training program, additional prescribing authority, extended or advanced practice designations, or an indication on the licence that additional training has been completed. This only includes training over and above that required for licensure. In other words, if training is mandatory for licensure, it is not noted in the chart.
3 Further limitations on types/classes of medication, patient groups or circumstances exist		The pharmacist's ability to perform the activity is restricted to certain patient groups, certain types/classes of medications, certain medical conditions or certain situations (e.g., restrictions on age for administration of vaccines in most provinces, etc.). Note: This footnote is only used for further restrictions beyond those indicated by the title of the column as defined above.
4 Activity can only be conducted within the terms of a formal collaborative practice agreement or approved collaborative setting or environment		The activity can only be conducted within a collaborative practice setting or environment that has been approved by the PRA and/or within the terms of a written formal collaborative agreement. The pharmacist is responsible for the assessment of patients and the decisions made about the drug and the clinical management required in collaboration with an authorized prescriber. The prescribing may be restricted by the parameters of the collaborative agreement or the protocols of the collaborative setting/environment, but not to specific medical conditions/circumstances outlined in legislation or PRA standards, directives or guidelines.