

This information is provided to inform you about changes to pharmacist activities. It is accurate to the best of our knowledge, but some issues will evolve over time.

Effective April 1, Alberta pharmacists will be able to prescribe.

Beginning April 1	Expected to begin in 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency prescriptions IF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It's not reasonably possible for patient to see an authorized prescriber, e.g., physician, nurse practitioner ○ There's an immediate need for drug therapy ○ The patient is seeking drug therapy appropriately (i.e., not where therapy has been refused by another authorized prescriber) • Adapting prescriptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Altering dosage, formula or regimen, ONLY IF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strength of drug is unavailable commercially ▪ patient's age, weight, kidney or liver function requires change of dosage ○ Substituting a drug expected to have similar therapeutic effect ○ Renewing a prescription to ensure continuity of care • In both adapting and emergencies, must be communicated with rationale to physician in timely manner (AMA recommends 24 hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacists may begin prescribing for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial access based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacist assessment at initial point of access ▪ Recommendation of another authorized prescriber ▪ Consultation with another health professional ○ Management of ongoing therapy of patients • Requires training and approval of Alberta College of Pharmacists • Intended for collaborative settings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>May not involve a physician</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ e.g., physiotherapist assesses, makes diagnosis, refers to pharmacist for anti-inflammatory • May be authorized to give injections such as vaccinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must complete recognized training program

What you can expect

Your patients may ask you about pharmacists who prescribe. You should also expect to be notified by pharmacists who have adapted a prescription or prescribed in an emergency.

Pharmacists who have completed their training may approach you about establishing a collaborative relationship to assist in ongoing management of your patients and in which pharmacists may prescribe for initial-access situations.

We are told pharmacists may charge patients for writing prescriptions.

What you can do

Inform yourself about pharmacist prescribing, so that you may inform your patients and your staff.

Should you be approached to develop a collaborative relationship with a pharmacist, we suggest you consider:

- Clarifying what conditions and what medications the pharmacist will be prescribing for
- Ensuring there are clear lines of communication established
- Ensuring there is a dispute resolution mechanism in place in case of a difference of opinion
- Ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of each team member are clearly defined (and understood by the other team members) based on their scopes of practice and the individual's knowledge, skill and ability
- Ensuring that the pharmacist has adequate liability protection.

Inform the AMA if you encounter situations within this new role for pharmacists that affect quality of care, patient safety or your ability to put Patients First®.

What the AMA is doing

The AMA will continue to work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta to encourage the Alberta College of Pharmacists (ACP) to develop a provincial, collaborative framework for pharmacist prescribing, including a structured dispute resolution process.

We will monitor problems as they arise and communicate with ACP on any issues encountered.

We will encourage collaboration with our pharmacist colleagues in hospital and community environments within a framework that ensures quality of care and enhances patient safety.

We will provide physicians with further updates related to initial access prescribing and management of ongoing therapy by pharmacists as more information becomes available.

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