

RN PRESCRIBING IN RURAL ALBERTA

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- ▶ Maggie Loucks is employed by McLeod River Primary Care Network
- ▶ There are no other conflicts or financial supports to declare

WHAT IS RN PRESCRIBING?

- ▶ CRNA states “intended to safely address client medication needs within a specific clinical practice area that the employer has determined has a unique client need for accessibility to medication and diagnostic tests...”
- ▶ Advanced certification for RNs to be able to order tests within a specific clinical area
 - ▶ Tests can include labwork, swabs, diagnostic imaging
- ▶ Able to prescribe any schedule 1 drug (excluding controlled drugs and substances)

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RN?

- ▶ RN registered with CRNA
- ▶ Have no conditions/restrictions on their practice permit
- ▶ Has 3000 clinical practice hours
 - ▶ 750 of those hours must be within the specific clinical area
- ▶ Completes approved nursing program for prescribing and ordering diagnostic tests
 - ▶ Currently the only program available is through Athabasca University online

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FROM THE COMPANY?

- ▶ Clinical policy supporting RNs prescribing and ordering diagnostic testing
 - ▶ Including critical results response
- ▶ Employer reference satisfactory to the registrar
 - ▶ Must come from manager/supervisor
- ▶ Clinical Support Tools (CSTs) specific to the clinical area
 - ▶ These need to be reviewed and signed off by a clinical manager/supervisor
 - ▶ These are not clear-cut algorithms, rather guiding documents for the RN to make autonomous decisions

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- ▶ RhPAP (Rural Health Professions Action Plan) has a Rural Education & Advanced Learning (REAL) funding opportunity for professional development
 - ▶ There is a return of service agreement for this funding
 - ▶ This could be used for other various professional development for various professions as well
- ▶ ARNET (Alberta Registered Nurses Educational Trust) has continuing education grants for RNs
 - ▶ Courses must be prepaid and completed to apply for this stream of funding

NOW WHAT?

- ▶ The RN has completed their course, submitted to CRNA, applied to Alberta Health for their PRAC ID (Alberta Health Practitioner Identification Number), arranged for E-Delivery through the EMR, set up with Connect Care/lab for test ordering
- ▶ They are ready to practice!

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRIMARY CARE?

- ▶ My current practice
 - ▶ Community Diabetes Program through the PCN
 - ▶ Unattached patients are referred to myself for management and follow-up
 - ▶ I also assist attached diabetic patients
 - ▶ I can order various lab tests
 - ▶ I am responsible for these results - there is no doctor “co-signing” these
 - ▶ If a result is out of range, the patient is referred to the walk-in clinic, to make an appointment with a physician or to the ER
 - ▶ I make clinical decisions on adjusting, renewing, initiating or stopping diabetes medications as needed
 - ▶ I can prescribe ACE/ARB and Statins

HEALTH NEIGHBOURHOOD

- ▶ I often refer to other providers in the community including:
 - ▶ Social Work
 - ▶ Psychologist
 - ▶ Dietician
 - ▶ Kinesiologist
 - ▶ Home Care
 - ▶ Specialty Clinics within the community or Edmonton
 - ▶ Cancer/Palliative Care
- ▶ Creating a full circle of supports for clients and their families
 - ▶ It's not always the patient in the chair who needs the supports

BUT YOU'RE NOT A DOCTOR!!

- ▶ CORRECT!
- ▶ RN Prescribing is not meant to replace physicians, it is meant to supplement care
- ▶ There are >1350 patients with diabetes in our community
- ▶ Within our local area, we currently have 6800+ patients without a physician
 - ▶ This will be increasing substantially as we lose 2 more physicians in the summer
- ▶ RNs are able to manage stable, mild/moderate conditions before they become severe
 - ▶ Hopefully keeping people out of the ER

POTENTIAL

- ▶ RNs with prescribing could manage so many different types of clinics:
 - ▶ Womens Health Clinics (PAPs, birth control, etc.)
 - ▶ STI/Sexual Health Clinics
 - ▶ Wound Care/Dermatology
 - ▶ Screening clinics (PAP, mammo, FIT)
 - ▶ Travel Clinics
 - ▶ Chronic Disease Management
 - ▶ Hypertension
 - ▶ Dyslipidemia
 - ▶ Diabetes
 - ▶ COPD

SPEED BUMPS

- ▶ There were some delays along the way
 - ▶ The Executive Director filled out one of the questions wrong, which had to be corrected through the college
- ▶ There were no CSTs to reference
 - ▶ There was a lot of back and forth between myself and the college with developing these tools
- ▶ Connect Care
 - ▶ AHS does not allow RNs to utilize RN prescribing with their organization
 - ▶ This took a long while to figure out what the stop was for the lab techs to enter the lab work

HOW IT'S GOING

- ▶ Working through time management
 - ▶ E.g. appointment frequency and length
 - ▶ Setting time aside to review lab results
- ▶ Creating a plan for having patients come in at least once per year for BP checks, foot checks, etc.
- ▶ Providing a needed service to the community
 - ▶ 33 new referrals for patients since January
 - ▶ Plus regular follow-ups and current patients

MY EXPERIENCE

- ▶ We established that there would be a need for support within diabetes in our community and I enrolled into the course
- ▶ There was a lot of back and forth and hiccups along the way to get this up and running
- ▶ I am happy to be working to full scope and being able to help people with their chronic conditions within an area I have been working in for many years
- ▶ Knowing the ins and outs of prescriptions and coverage can help patients and physicians
 - ▶ E.g. knowing when a special auth form needs to be filled out - now I can do those
- ▶ Patients have a point of contact for their chronic condition whether they have a family doc or not
 - ▶ Often 5+ weeks to get an appointment at the Medical Clinic

TAKE AWAYS

- ▶ RNs can provide support in a variety of specific areas of care
 - ▶ Can help to alleviate strain in the system and manage patients with chronic conditions
- ▶ RNs can autonomously practice within this care area without needing a physician and sign off on the results

HOW CAN YOU IMAGINE
RN PRESCRIBING
WORKING IN YOUR
CLINICAL AREA?

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT INFO

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- ▶ FEEL FREE TO CONTACT MYSELF FOR ANY QUESTIONS!

REFERENCES

- ▶ <https://nurses.ab.ca/media/c10bqrfj/19-registered-nurse-prescribing-schedule-1-drugs-and-ordering-diagnostic-tests-requirements-and-standards-2022.pdf>
- ▶ <https://www.athabascau.ca/health-disciplines/about/about-our-offerings/professional-development/ab-rn-prescribing.html>
- ▶ <https://connect.nurses.ab.ca/home/%2Frn-and-np-standards-and-regulation%2Fguidelines%2F>
- ▶ <https://rhpap.ca/health-professionals/continuing-professional-development/rural-education-and-advanced-learning-real/>
- ▶ <https://arnet.ca/apply#grants>
- ▶ CRNA Guidelines and Standards
- ▶ Athabasca University RN Prescribing Course
- ▶ RhPAP REAL Program
- ▶ ARNET RN Grants