

Professional Notice

To: Pharmacy Practitioners
From: Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
Date: April 18, 2020
Re: Amendments to Drug Administration Standards

Amendments to Drug Administration Standards

The NSCP has broadened pharmacists' authority under the *Standards of Practice: Drug Administration* (section 3.1.3) to include all drugs administered by the intramuscular (IM) or subcutaneous (SC) route, with the exception of drugs and other substances used for cosmetic purposes (e.g., Botox®, Dysport®, etc.) where:

- the pharmacist has been granted a *NSCP Drug Administration by Injection Permit*;
- the patient is two years of age or older; and
- the pharmacist does so consistent with the Standards and *Appendix G - Special Considerations and Limitations when Providing Injections*.

As this expands the authority to administer drugs not previously administered by pharmacists, it is important to pay particular attention to *Appendix G - Special Considerations and Limitations when Providing Injections*.

For clarity, this broadened authority removes regulatory barriers to allow pharmacists to meet the needs of their patients. However, pharmacists should only provide these services if they have the capacity and are able to do so safely.

Risk Assessment when Administering Drugs by Injection During COVID-19

As the administration of drugs by injections requires that pharmacists be within two metres (6 feet) of a patient to provide care, pharmacy staff members should undertake a risk assessment to determine whether performing the requested injection can be done safely, including:

- using the provincial COVID-19 screening tool to identify persons who are symptomatic or have been in close contact with someone who has screened positive for COVID-19;
- determining whether the service requested can be deferred or referred;
- identifying the risks involved in performing the requested service (e.g., being within two metres of the patient); and
- determining whether the appropriate PPE to perform the requested pharmacy service is available.

Given that there is now community transmission in Nova Scotia, a surgical/procedure mask should be used for direct patient care activities that require the patient to be within two metres (6 feet).

Temporary Suspension of Drug Administration Notification During COVID-19

A provision has been made to temporarily suspend the requirement to notify the patient's primary care provider of drug administration by injection during COVID-19.