

Professional Notice

To: Pharmacy Practitioners
From: Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
Date: January 15, 2019
Re: Revised Prescribing Standards

Revisions have been made to the *Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs*. The revised Standards will become effective on February 1, 2019.

As Nova Scotia faces increasing challenges with access to healthcare, it is important that pharmacists make full use of their knowledge and skills. The NSCP is modernizing the Prescribing Standards in two phases. Phase I is complete and allows pharmacists to better use their professional judgment when prescribing, while ensuring that appropriate safeguards remain in place. Phase II revisions are underway and will expand the categories for which a pharmacist can prescribe. These are anticipated to be launched later in 2019.

Phase I consultations were conducted through survey and focus groups with pharmacy practitioners, family physicians, and nurse practitioners to inform the revisions. The following is a summary of the feedback received, and the subsequent revisions made: [Phase I Prescribing Standards Consultation: Summary of Feedback and Responses](#).

The NSCP consistently heard the importance of pharmacists practicing to their optimal scope and the need for clarity in the Standards. The revised Standards are significantly streamlined with the following substantial revisions:

All prescribing categories

- An in-person patient assessment is only mandatory when an assessment of physical factors is required to prescribe.
- How prescribing and follow-up details are documented is left to the professional judgment of the pharmacist.
- Standardized data elements replace the need to use a standardized notification form.

Prescribing renewals, adaptations, and therapeutic substitutions

- Pharmacists may prescribe up to a 180 days' supply when prescribing a renewal.
- Prescription renewals are no longer limited to chronic, stable conditions.
- Prescription renewals are no longer limited to existing patients of the pharmacy.
- Pharmacists may adapt and complete a therapeutic substitution when renewing.

Prescribing for preventable diseases

- Pharmacists can now prescribe for malaria prophylaxis.
- A pharmacist may provide comprehensive travel health services upon completion of a recognized certificate/diploma.

Prescribing when a diagnosis is provided

- Language has been revised to facilitate pharmacists prescribing for both acute (e.g., strep throat, otitis media) and chronic conditions (e.g., high blood pressure, diabetes).

The NSCP will be holding a webinar in February to outline the revisions and to answer questions. An invitation will be sent shortly.

If after reading the [revised Standards](#) you still have questions, please feel free to contact Anne Marentette, Pharmacy Practice Manager: amarentette@nspharmacists.ca.