

PRACTICE POLICY

Patient Records

Introduction

Pharmacy practitioners are an integral part of primary care delivery in Nova Scotia and custodians of health records for the patients under their care. Like all health record custodians, pharmacy practitioners have a professional responsibility to their patients, and to other members of the patient's healthcare team, to ensure that the records that they create and maintain are comprehensive, accurate, and current.

Appropriately maintained patient records are necessary for continuity of care. They contribute to the consistency and quality of patient care by providing detailed descriptions of a patient's health status, past and current medications, and rationale for treatment decisions.

Policy

This policy sets out the minimum requirements for the creation and maintenance of patient records. Pharmacy practitioners are responsible for ensuring that:

- Information is routinely collected, documented, and updated about a patient's:
 - allergies or intolerances (including previous reactions)
 - medical conditions (including pregnancy and lactation where applicable)
 - indications for drug therapy
 - laboratory or other diagnostic test results relevant to their medication management
 - physical characteristics (e.g., weight, height, relevant disabilities) where applicable
- Information is routinely collected, documented, and updated about a patient's medications or other treatments that may affect the patient's medical condition or interact with their current therapy. This may include:
 - medication samples
 - schedule II and III medications (e.g., exempted codeine preparations)
 - natural health products
 - medications from another pharmacy or hospital (if not available in the provincial drug information system)
 - previously dispensed medications (e.g., PRN or acute use)
 - use of other substances (e.g., alcohol, nicotine, cannabis)
 - healthcare products or devices

- The patient record includes documentation of care provided by the pharmacist including, but not limited to:
 - management of drug therapy problems (e.g., medication adherence, dose changes)
 - assessment results, clinical decisions, and recommendations made
 - monitoring and follow-up
 - relevant counseling details as determined by the pharmacist's professional judgment
 - communication between providers
- Prescriptions that are requested by the patient to be dispensed at a later date (i.e., "logged/unfilled prescriptions") are assessed for appropriateness of therapy at the time they are entered in the patient's record so that the record in the provincial drug information system remains accurate. Any changes must be managed at that time and documented in the patient record.
- Discontinued medications are deactivated.
- Prescriptions awaiting pick-up are routinely reviewed to ensure that they are current (i.e., less than 30 days) and if not, they have been appropriately managed to determine if they should be deactivated.