COUNCIL POLICY

Pharmacist Prescribing in Practice Settings Approved by Council

Background

The Pharmacy Act and its Pharmacist Prescribing Drugs Regulations, along with the Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs, establish a regulatory framework for pharmacist prescribing in Nova Scotia. Within this framework, pharmacists are enabled to bring the full extent of their knowledge and skills to meeting the needs of their patients, supporting continuity of care and public safety and helping to meet the challenges of healthcare delivery in Nova Scotia.

The Pharmacist Drug Prescribing Regulations s. 3(3)(f) authorizes Council to approve distinct practice settings – such as a hospital, a home for special care or a multi-disciplinary environment where collaborative relationships or appropriate protocols are established – to be a setting in which a pharmacist may prescribe beyond what is authorized for pharmacists generally. While the authority to prescribe drugs provided by the Pharmacy Act and its regulations applies to all pharmacists licensed to practice direct patient care regardless of the setting, the expanded prescribing authorized by s. 3(3)(f) is restricted to pharmacists who practice in hospitals and other healthcare settings approved by Council where collaborative relationships or appropriate protocols are established. For clarity, while a hospital, a home for special care or a multi-disciplinary environment may be eligible for approval, they still must assure Council that it is in the public’s best interest for pharmacists practicing in that setting to have expanded prescribing authority. Council must be satisfied that these practice settings have the appropriate oversight and safeguards in place to ensure that the public is protected.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for Council to approve a practice setting for expanded pharmacist prescribing authority as set out in Pharmacist Drug Prescribing Regulations s. 3(3)(f).

Policy

Practice settings may apply to Council to request that pharmacist practicing under their jurisdiction may prescribe within established collaborative relationships and/or appropriate protocols, thus enabling pharmacists in that practice setting to prescribe beyond what is authorized for pharmacists generally.

Practice setting applicants will provide Council with the following assurances to support Council in being satisfied that the expanded prescribing authority enabled by Council’s approval will be in the public’s best interest:
• Only pharmacists practicing under their jurisdiction and holding a direct patient licence with the NSCP will undertake prescribing.

• Pharmacist prescribing in the practice setting will be in the public interest, support continuity of care, and be for medication that is safe and suitable for use in the community.

• Pharmacist prescribing will be consistent with the Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs and be limited to the circumstances defined by the practice setting.

• The practice setting will provide appropriate oversight of prescribing activities and take responsibility for the prescribing by pharmacists under their jurisdiction.

• A framework for pharmacists’ accountability for their prescribing is in place; and

• The NSCP will be notified if any of the assurances provided are no longer true.