

Proposed Amendments to the *Pharmacy Act*Frequently Asked Questions

Why are updates being proposed to the *Pharmacy Act*?

The *Pharmacy Act* is being reviewed to reflect the changes of pharmacy practice. The proposed amendments include expanding pharmacists' service offerings, defining pharmacy technicians' roles, embracing innovation, modernizing the disciplinary process, and promoting higher care standards. These revisions are key to keeping pace with technological advancements and aligning with health care developments across Canada.

What limitations does the current *Pharmacy Act* have?

The current Act is outdated, limiting pharmacists' service range and not covering pharmacy operations or the role of pharmacy technicians. It also lacks quality assurance measures found in other regions. These limitations hinder pharmacists' contributions to health care, especially in remote areas like Nunavut.

What are the goals of amending the *Pharmacy Act*?

The amendments aim to expand the scope of practice of pharmacists by allowing them to prescribe medications, administer vaccines, and manage medication therapies. The changes also recognize pharmacy technicians', enabling them to assist more in medication dispensing and allowing pharmacists to focus on clinical services. Enhanced quality assurance and support for innovations like telepharmacy are also included.

How do Nunavut's pharmacists' roles compare to those in other Canadian jurisdictions?

The Canadian Pharmacists Association tracks the range of services pharmacists are authorized to provide across jurisdictions. While pharmacists in Canada generally share core responsibilities, Nunavut has the narrowest scope. The proposed amendments bridge this gap, aligning Nunavut's pharmacy practices with broader national standards.

How will the proposed legislation define the role of pharmacy technicians? Pharmacy technicians will see their roles formally recognized and regulated under the amended Act, allowing for direct involvement in patient care processes, such as medication distribution. Currently, no such recognition exists in Nunavut.

How will the proposed legislation encourage innovation and technology adoption in pharmacy practice?

The proposed legislation will support innovation by allowing for the integration of digital health solutions, such as electronic prescriptions and telepharmacy, which can improve access to pharmacy services, particularly in remote communities.

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Why is there a proposed change to the title: the *Pharmacy Act* to the *Pharmacy Professions Act*?

The name change to Pharmacy Professions Act clarifies the legislation's focus, regulating pharmacists' and pharmacy technicians' roles and standards, as the current title does not reflect the Act's content.

How has pharmacy practice in Canada evolved, and why should Nunavut catch up?

Across Canada, pharmacy practice has expanded, with pharmacists providing a wider range of services. Nunavut needs to update its legislation to match these national advancements, enabling pharmacists to contribute fully to patient care and addressing unique health care challenges in the territory.

Why do the complaints and disciplinary components to the Act require amendments?

The complaints and disciplinary provisions in the current Act are outdated. They do not reflect modern conflict resolution processes, nor are they compassionate to individuals' potential realities.

An updated complaints and disciplinary process would consider an alternative dispute process whereby the complainant, the professional, and a facilitator would work together and come to a resolution. A fitness to practice provision will also be considered to account for all the qualities and capabilities of an individual relevant to their capacity to practice, including but not limited to freedom from any cognitive, physical, psychological, or emotional condition, or a dependence on alcohol or drugs, that impairs their ability to practice.

How do the proposed amendments align with government priorities?

The amendments support government initiatives for health care advancement, patient-centered care, and equitable access to health care services.

What outcomes are expected from an updated *Pharmacy Act*?

Expected outcomes include enhanced patient safety, better medication access, reduced unclaimed medications, and improved integration with other regions. Patients will benefit from streamlined services and comprehensive medication management, while health care providers will experience better support and collaboration from pharmacy professionals.

How can Nunavummiut and other stakeholders contribute to the revision process?

Stakeholders can engage through public consultations, providing feedback on the discussion paper, and collaborating with the government to identify improvements and best practices.

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How can I learn more about these changes?

For more information, visit the Nunavut Department of Health's website at www.gov.nu.ca/health. You can also contact the Department at NU.Pharmacyact@gov.nu.ca for specific inquiries. Regular updates and announcements are posted on government social media channels and through press releases. Stakeholders are encouraged to participate in meetings, webinars, and public consultations for deeper insights.

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