The Future of Pharmacy Technicians in Manitoba: Regulations and Examinations

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Outline

• Future for Pharmacy Technicians
• Attributes of a Profession
• Professional competencies for entry to practice pharmacy technicians
• Accreditation of technician programs
• PEBC examinations
• Manitoba, Technicians and Regulations
• Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians
• Other Provinces – Ontario and Alberta
• Questions
On Track for a New Profession

• Recent changes have produced a national movement for pharmacy technicians

• It is has been recognized that we are the point in Canada where it is necessary to formalize and standardize the role of pharmacy technicians
Formation of a Profession

A profession arises when an occupation transforms itself through “the development of formal qualifications based upon education, apprenticeship, and examinations, the emergence of regulatory bodies with powers to admit and discipline members and some degree of monopoly rights”

Structural Attributes of a Profession

- specialized body of knowledge and skills
- unique socialization of student members
- licensure/certification
- professional associations
- governance by peers
- social prestige

- vital service to society
- code of ethics
- testing of competence
- autonomy
- equivalence of members, and
- special relationship with clients.
Step 1. Development of formal qualifications based upon education

• Professional competencies for entry to practice have been developed by The National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA)
  – Mission of NAPRA is to facilitate the activities of provincial pharmacy regulatory authorities in their service of public interest
NAPRA Competencies

• Technicians competencies were developed in 2007
• Response to the changing pharmacist and technician roles and greater complexity in the pharmacy practice environment.
• Representatives of the pharmacy profession from all Canadian provinces participated in the process
NAPRA’s Vision for Pharmacy Technicians

• Pharmacy technicians will work in collaborative relationships and will be committed to patient-centred, outcomes-focused care.

• Their expertise will focus on the knowledge, skills and abilities related to technical aspects of prescription and patient information, and of product and drug distribution.

• Pharmacy technicians will be responsible and accountable for ensuring patient safety and for the accuracy and quality of product preparation and release.
Competencies for Entry Level Pharmacy Technicians

• The competencies describe the primary functions and activities and reflect the common and essential knowledge, skill, abilities and attitudes at the point of entry into the profession required to benefit the Canadian public
Competencies for Entry Level Pharmacy Technicians

• Legal, Ethical and Professional Responsibilities
• Professional Collaboration and Teamwork
• Drug Distribution: Prescription and Patient Information
• Drug Distribution: Product Preparation
• Drug Distribution: Product Release
• Drug Distribution: System and Inventory Controls
• Communication and Education
• Management Knowledge and Skills
• Quality Assurance
Step 2. Accreditation of Pharmacy Technician Programs

- The accreditation process ensures that accredited programs contain the necessary content to teach the competencies necessary for successful graduates to safely and effectively do the job of a regulated pharmacy technician.
The Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs
Le Conseil canadien de l’agrément des programmes de pharmacie

- Responsible for accrediting pharmacy technician programs in Canada
- A committee with representatives from pharmacy technicians, technician educator, and pharmacist groups developed the accreditation standards
- Winnipeg Technical College received accreditation in 2010
Accreditation and Manitoba

– If you graduated from Winnipeg Technical College (WTC) June 2010 or later, you can state that you graduated from an accredited program

– If you graduated from WTC prior to 2010 you did not graduate from an accredited program
Step 3. Assessment of Entry to Practice Competencies

Entry-to-Practice Examination for Pharmacy Technicians
The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC)

• national certification body for the pharmacy profession
• non-profit, self-supporting organization

Purpose:
• assess the qualifications and competence of candidates seeking to become licensed by provincial regulatory authorities
• award certificates of qualification to pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to practice safely
PT Evaluating Examination
Eligibility Criteria

• Candidates are permitted to take the Evaluating Examination by providing evidence of a minimum of 2,000 hours of work and/or teaching in the past 36 months in the field of pharmacy

• Special application process if some or all work experience occurred outside Canada
PT Evaluating Examination

Examination Information

– 3 hour written exam consisting of 150 multiple choice questions
– exam is offered twice yearly (spring and fall)
– Cost $350

Limit on Number of Attempts

– a maximum of four attempts
PT Evaluating Examination

Blueprint:

Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences 25%
  – includes: pharmacology, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmaceutics

Pharmacy Practice 65%
  – includes: pharmaceutical calculations, dispensing and prescription processing, inventory management, compounding (sterile and non-sterile), federal laws and regulations

Social Behavioural and Administrative Pharmacy 10%
  – includes: profession of pharmacy, management practices, health care systems, quality assurance/patient safety
PT Evaluating Examination

Candidate Resources

• PEBC web site (www.pebc.ca)
• Downloadable information
• Evaluating Examination information
  – application procedure
  – taking the examination
  – references, learning resources, sample questions, other information
Pharmacy Technician Qualifying Examination for Entry-to-Practice

- national entry-to-practice examination for the assessment and certification of the competence of Pharmacy Technicians for purposes of registration
- exam consists of two parts:
  - written multiple choice question exam (MCQ)
  - performance-based exam

  Objective Structured Performance Examination (OSPE)
- exam offered twice yearly (winter and summer)
PT Qualifying Examination
Eligibility Criteria

• Completion of the pharmacy technician program at a CCAPP accredited college or institution in Canada
  OR

• Successful standing and status, gained up to and including December 31, 2008, for the OCP pharmacy technician certification examination
  OR

• Successful standing and status, gained up to and including June 30, 2008, for the PTCB (AB) pharmacy technician certification examination
  OR

• Successful completion of a PEBC Evaluating Examination (pharmacy technician or pharmacist)
  OR

• Successful completion of an accredited pharmacist degree program in Canada or the U.S.
Eligibility Criteria: 2,000 h of work and/or teaching in the past 36 months

Direct Eligibility Criteria:
- completion of a CCAPP program
- pass OCP Cert. Exam (2008)
- pass PEBC Evaluating Exam (PT or pharmacist)
- completion of an accredited pharmacist degree program in Canada or U.S.
Evaluating Exam

Qualifying Exam

MB Bridging???

Dec 31st, 2015 Deadline

Direct Eligibility Criteria:
- completion of a CCAPP program
- pass OCP Cert. Exam (2008)
- pass PEBC Evaluating Exam (PT or pharmacist)
- completion of an accredited pharmacist degree program in Canada or U.S.

Eligibility Criteria:
2,000 h of work and/or teaching in the past 36 months
QUALIFYING EXAMINATION
BLUEPRINT

• Based on NAPRA’s Professional Competencies for Canadian Pharmacy Technicians at Entry to Practice

• 9 competencies:
  1. Legal, Ethical, & Professional Responsibilities
  2. Professional Collaboration & Team Work
  3. Drug Distribution: Prescription and Patient Information
  4. Drug Distribution: Product Preparation
  5. Drug Distribution: Product Release
  6. Drug Distribution: System & Inventory Controls
  7. Communication & Education
  8. Management Knowledge & Skills
  9. Quality Assurance
PT QE EXAMINATION STRUCTURE

Part I - written exam - multiple choice (MCQ)

• tests understanding and application of knowledge
• tests ability to make judgments in situations relevant to practice

Part II - performance assessment - Objective, Structured, Performance Exam (OSPE)

• tests ability to communicate
• tests ability to perform professional functions
• tests ability to problem-solve and make judgments
What is an OSPE?

**Objective, Structured, Performance Examination**

- simulations of common, critical professional tasks
- series of **stations** through which all examinees rotate
  - examinees perform professional tasks
  - behaviours are observed & evaluated
- stations may involve interactions with standardized patients/clients/health care professionals
- may involve non-interactive stations
  - prescription checking
  - performing a compounding technique
Part I (MCQ) Format

• One 4 hour sitting

• 170 questions in total
  – 140 questions determine score
  – remaining 30 questions are being pretested for future exams
    • pretest questions are indistinguishable from others
    • multiple forms of exam – to pretest as many questions as possible
  – scored portion of exam identical in all forms
  – cost $375
Part II (OSPE) Format

- one 3 hour sitting (morning or afternoon assigned) + 2 to 2.5 hours for pre- and post-exam processes
- 4 stations are “interactive” involving standardized patients, clients, health professionals
- 5 other stations are “quiet” (video station on sterile compounding, non-sterile compounding station, 3 prescription checking stations)
- one or two pretest stations
- scored portion of exam identical; pretest station varies
- Cost $900
TYPICAL STATION

- References may be provided
  CPS +/- others
- Patient record/profile in some stations
- Non-Rx medications (NPMs) or Rx devices in some stations
- Chairs for candidate, client and assessor
AN ‘INTERACTIVE’ STATION
A NON-INTERACTIVE STATION

- Station Instructions
- Patient Profile
- References - one or more
- Prescription - not always present
- Candidate Response Sheet
PTQE NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS

• maximum of three attempts at each part
• must re-take only the part failed
• additional course work and/or practical experience after three attempts
• Board will consider a petition for one additional and final attempt
• must complete both parts within 3 years of passing one part
PT QE CANDIDATE RESOURCES

• information booklet (downloadable)
  – list of references
  – sample questions/stations

• PEBC website
  – video illustration of OSPE
PT QE CANDIDATE RESOURCES

The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada

Providing Excellence in Certification for the Pharmacy Profession

Pharmacists Enter Here

Pharmacy Technicians Enter Here
Manitoba’s Regulatory Framework

• Bill 41 – *The Pharmaceutical Act* - Passed December 2006

• Regulations Development – the long and winding road
  – Approval of members (pharmacists) required
  – Defeated March 2008
  – Revised Regulations Development Document – October 2010
  – Voting in Process – Completed November 9th, 2010

• Bill 18 – *Health Professions Act*
Manitoba’s Regulatory Framework

Qualification of pharmacy technicians

52(2) A person is qualified as a pharmacy technician if the person is at least 18 years of age and:

a) has graduated from a program of pharmacy technician training as approved by council or successfully completed a bridging educational program as approved by council;

b) has passed any examinations approved by the council; and

c) has successfully completed a structured practical training program approved by council.
Manitoba’s Regulatory Framework

52(3) pharmacy technician may engage in the following aspects of the practice of pharmacy, under the supervision of a member:

a) dispensing, subject to approval by a member under s.50(1d) and any standards related to a member counselling the patient;

b) operating an external dispensing site; and

c) identifying and assessing when drug-related problems require referral to the member.
Manitoba’s Regulatory Framework

- 52(4) In addition to the delegated duties described in 54(2), the following duties supporting the practice of pharmacy may be performed by a pharmacy technician, under supervision of a member and in accordance with applicable practice directions:

  a) reviewing the information on the prescription for compliance with federal and provincial regulations;
  
  b) replenishing drug storage containers and dispensing machines;
  
  c) performing a final check when the process of preparing a drug for dispensing was performed by another technician, student or intern, prior to dispensing providing that, prior thereto, an application setting out drug packaging preparation processes consistent with the standards of practice and patient safety have been approved by Council;
Manitoba’s Regulatory Framework

d) providing instruction to a person on how to operate a medical device but not provide any explanation involving the interpretation of the results or value of the device;

e) inquiring of the practitioner or extended practice pharmacist, and receiving the instruction, of whether an existing prescription can be refilled as previously prescribed and without any changes to the prescription;

f) entering the pharmacy when it is closed and, with the exception of (e) and (f) perform the duties listed under this section.
Vision

CAPT is the national association providing an influential voice, leadership and support to pharmacy technicians and pharmacy support staff facilitating practice excellence contributing to positive health outcomes.
Mission

CAPT will advocate and promote the role of the pharmacy technician and pharmacy support staff and the advancement of the profession.

CAPT will support and empower pharmacy technicians and pharmacy support staff in the pursuit of practice excellence through:

- Communication
- Education and professional development opportunities
- Partnerships and collaboration with pharmacy stakeholders
President : Mary Bozoian C.Ph.T.

Vice President: Robert Solek C.Ph.T.

Director of Internal Affairs: Debra Chartier (MB)

Director of Finance: Sheena Deane C.Ph.T.

Director of Administration: Angela Silva C.Ph.T.

Director of Promotions : Cathy Schuster C.Ph.T.

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Step 4. The Emergence of a Regulatory Body with Powers to Admit and Discipline Members

• Has not happened yet in Manitoba

• Timelines unclear but most likely scenario is regulations under Bill 18 (Health Professions Act)

• Other Provinces have moved ahead
Ontario

- Dec 2002 – OCP decides to pursue the regulation of Technicians
- Feb 2005 – OCP receives government OK to submit a proposal
- May 2006 – report submitted to Minister of Health recommending that pharmacy technicians be regulated under the umbrella of the OCP as a separate class of registration.
- Dec 2006 – Bill 171, the Health Systems Improvement Act, was introduced to the Ontario Legislature
- June 2007 – Bill 171 received Royal Assent
- 2010 – first group of technicians expected to be registered
Ontario

• Registration is voluntary, but an employer might require registration for certain jobs.

• In Ontario, only registered people will be able to use the title “technician” (other people currently called technicians will likely be called “assistants”).
Alberta

- 2003 – Steering committee established to consider self-governance of pharmacy technicians
- 2005 – Steering committee made a proposal for technician regulation to the provincial Minister of Health
- 2006 – Pharmacy technicians formed the Pharmacy Technician Regulatory Committee of Alberta
- 2007 – The Pharmacy Technician Regulation Working Group was established to develop a plan to achieve technician regulation in Alberta
- 2008 – ACP began accepting applications for the voluntary Pharmacy Technician Register. To date there are 975 pharmacy technician members of ACP.
Alberta (cont)

“Regulated pharmacy technicians will be directly responsible and accountable for the technical functions related to prescription preparation and processing. They will have to demonstrate key competencies through nationally administered exams and will take on the responsibility, accountability, and any resulting legal liability for their work.”
No Province is “Grandfathering”

• To date there has been no standardized education, scope of practice, role definition, restricted title or legal responsibility for individuals identified as pharmacy technicians

• Without the exam process regulatory bodies cannot measure competence and assure the public of their competency
On Track for a New Profession

- Interesting and challenging time to be a pharmacy technician
- More questions than answers
- PEBC process is most likely path to the future
- No limits are expected on when Qualifying Exam can be written
On Track for a New Profession

• Evaluating Exam expected to be offered in MB in fall of 2011
• Preparing for and writing the Evaluating Exam should be current focus
• Important to stay informed to make the best choices for your career
• Employers play a key role in your choices
Acknowledgements

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For more information:

• NAPRA - [www.napra.ca/docs/0/95/777.asp](http://www.napra.ca/docs/0/95/777.asp)
• PEBC - [www.pebc.ca](http://www.pebc.ca)
• Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association - [www.napra.org/pages/Manitoba/default.aspx](http://www.napra.org/pages/Manitoba/default.aspx)
• Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians [www.capt.ca](http://www.capt.ca)
• Ontario College of Pharmacists – [www.ocpinfo.com](http://www.ocpinfo.com)
• Alberta College of Pharmacists – [pharmacists.ab.ca/nCollege/default.aspx](http://pharmacists.ab.ca/nCollege/default.aspx)