

I am writing you a letter in support of the proposed expanded scope of practice for pharmacists. I am a pharmacist who has been practicing for approx 7 years, and in that time I have worked in most areas of pharmacy practice. I have worked in a community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, long term care, home care, and most recently I am now a clinical pharmacist working with a Family Health Team in primary practice.

I fully support the recent recommendations by the Ontario College of Pharmacists, relating to the extended roles of pharmacy practice. Pharmacists have been able to go beyond prior limitations of just dispensing prescriptions, and it is important to allow pharmacists to expand by extending their scope of practice.

Primary Care and Family Health Teams are a perfect example of how pharmacists can now work closely with the team of health professionals, physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, dieticians, social workers, to provide more complete health care services for Ontarians. As a primary care pharmacist, the purpose of my role is not to dispense prescriptions, but rather to work with patients on chronic disease state management and prevention of disease rather than treatment of acute illnesses. By allowing pharmacists to demonstrate insulin delivery, or pricking fingers for self-management of blood glucose for diabetics, or allowing the demonstration of inhalation devices for asthmatics, the HPRAC is acknowledging the expanded role pharmacists have taken on as Certified Diabetes Educators and Certified Asthma Educators.

All of these changes are instrumental in using pharmacists to a larger potential, and acknowledging that we do more today in the primary care team than we have been able to do in the past. As newer graduates of pharmacy degrees, we are better equipped to work within the team to do routine lab monitoring and chronic disease state management. Our pharmacy degrees are now a minimum of 5 years of university, and our quality assurance committees within the Ontario College of Pharmacists have ensured ongoing testing for pharmacists to ensure quality amongst the profession.

I applaud the proposed changes, in allowing pharmacists to use our skills to further enhance patient care in Ontario.

Sincerely,

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Marchese Health Care