

I support the OPA's position on the expanded scope of practise for pharmacists. As a pharmacist, I assess and refer patients to other health care providers, work with physicians to modify prescriptions, manage complex medication regimes from multiple prescribers, and provide primary care to patients who don't have a family physician. In my community, I am the most visible and accessible health care provider and because of this I am able to respond promptly to my patient's needs.

With pharmacy technicians soon to be regulated in Ontario to assume more responsibility for the technical aspects of dispensing, pharmacists will then have the opportunity to be involved in an expanded role--to more effectively use our skills and knowlege. I support OPA's position that pharmacists should be able to:

- * refill chronic medications defined under a set protocol;
- * refill a patient's chronic medication on a one-time basis if the original prescriber is not available;
- * order and receive laboratory tests, as needed, under a defined set of protocols;
- * monitor and adjust doses of chronic medications under a prescribed protocol;
- * adapt a prescription; initiate therapy for minor ailments from a set formulary;
- * initiate therapy for travel prophylaxis and immunizations when needed; provide immunization services to patients, if necessary; and
- * assess, initiate and monitor the most appropriate therapeutic approach for smoking cessation.

Currently in my practise, I work closely with the physicians in our clinic however I am limited as to how I can help our patients by current protocols. Including the above in our scope of practise will not only make better use of my time and knowledge but free up the physicians time as well. The ministry needs to work towards a model that will enable us to take on this expanded role.

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