



Regulation of Pharmacy Technicians

“Challenges and Opportunities”

Deanna Williams, Registrar
Ontario College of Pharmacists
May 30, 2009





ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

How we got here...

- 1996 – voluntary certification
- 1998 – decision to pursue regulation



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

The Need for Change

- Shift in education
 - new curriculum - U of T
 - community colleges
- Expanding the role of the pharmacist
- Practitioner shortages



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

The Challenges

- The profession
- Technicians/assistants
 - responsibility and accountability?
 - inconsistencies in education and training
- Political will?
- Paving new ground



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Challenges (cont'd)

- Determining right direction
 - “status quo” or “regulated”?
 - optional or mandatory?
 - independent actions or not?
 - title protection?
 - accountability?
- Integration into College, Council
- Finding a national solution



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Key Question

- If the technicians of tomorrow do not exist today...
 - what is needed to bring today's technicians/assistants to the point of regulation?



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

CONSULT!

CONSULT!

CONSULT!



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Opportunities

- Listening to fears and concerns
- Ask the right questions
- Anticipate obstacles and barriers
- Know what is already in place;
Learn
- Identifying gaps



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Opportunities

- Maintain options/choice
- Status quo or regulation
- Regulatory options in Ontario



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Opportunities

- Regulation of pharmacy technicians included in Minister referral to the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council, 2006
- Extensive consultation, and widespread support across Canada, the U.S. and globe
- HPRAC recommendation → 2006



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Title Protection

- Pharmacy Technicians to become members of the Ontario College of Pharmacists under a new class of registration
- “Pharmacy Technician” title protected in Ontario; only to be used by registered members of the Ontario College of Pharmacists



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

“RPhT” role in Ontario

- Given Access to Authorized Act – *dispensing and compounding*, subject to terms, conditions and limitations:
 - Confirm accuracy and completeness of prepared pharmaceutical products
 - Transfer prescriptions to, or receive from, other pharmacies
 - Sign off on technical accuracy of filled prescriptions



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

“RPhT” Terms and Conditions on Scope

- Pharmacy technicians will practice within the scope of their profession (defined in NAPRA Competency Document and Standards of Practice)
 - Proposed scope re: counseling
 - “*Shall only counsel a patient, directly or indirectly, with respect to a drug or medical condition, when the counseling does not require therapeutic knowledge or clinical analysis or assessment*”



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

New Vision for Pharmacy

- *Blueprint for Pharmacy* creates a new vision for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, including:
 - protecting the safety, security and integrity of the drug distribution system through the enhanced role of regulated pharmacy technicians and greater automation of dispensing and,
 - leading the development of and participation in medication safety and quality improvement initiatives

(Task Force on a Blueprint for Pharmacy. *Blueprint for Pharmacy: The Vision for Pharmacy*. Ottawa (ON): Canadian Pharmacists Association, 2008.)



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

The Challenge of Change

- Accepting the new role and ability of pharmacy technicians
- Accepting and developing the new role for pharmacists
- Establishing the balance of human resources (pharmacists, technicians, assistants)
- Finding new ways to work together, new logistics of workflow



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Supporting the Change

- Continue with national efforts, as described in the Blueprint for Action
 - Promote and evaluate best practices and innovative approaches in drug distribution and workflow
 - Define and achieve consensus on the roles, responsibilities and competency requirements of regulated pharmacy technicians
 - Enact a regulatory framework that grants more authority of responsibility and accountability to pharmacy technicians

(Task Force on a Blueprint for Pharmacy. Blueprint for Pharmacy: The Vision for Pharmacy. Ottawa (ON): Canadian Pharmacists Association, 2008.)



Ontario Model for Entry to Practice

The Process for Registration as a Pharmacy Technician

In the Profession

(Includes Career or Community College Programs and On-the-Job Training)

1. PEBC Evaluation Exam
(previously OCP certification exam)

2. Bridging Education Program

3. PEBC qualifying exam (written and practical)

4. OCP Jurisprudence Exam

5. Registration with OCP

Entering the Profession

1. Graduation from a CCAPP
Accredited Pharmacy
Technician Education Program

2. Structured practical training



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Bridging Program Framework

- Four courses (total of 150 hours, prior learning assessment available for most)
 - Professional Practice (ethics, jurisprudence, professionalism)
 - Drug Knowledge/Pharmacology
 - Drug Distribution (independent double check, verified in workplace)
 - Product Preparation (calculations, aseptic technique, compounding)



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Currently

- 14 colleges accredited by CCAPP:
 - 9 Ontario
 - 4 Alberta
 - 1 British Columbia
 - several more expected shortly across Canada



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Currently

- Over 5000 Ontario technicians eligible to do bridging
- Over 800 have completed first 2 courses already
- Delighted and overwhelmed with response!



ONTARIO
COLLEGE OF
PHARMACISTS

Next Steps

- First PEBC qualifying exam for pharmacy technicians – MCQ and OSCE
 - Pilot, August 2009
 - 160 candidates
- Two pharmacy technicians, one hospital, on community will be elected to OCP Council August 2010
- Registration – anticipated January 2010