

# PHARMACY IN CANADA

Pharmacy is changing in Canada. Pharmacists are taking on enhanced roles and are increasingly being recognized as trusted providers of high-quality, accessible health care. Given the increasing number of medications, our aging population and the growing cost of pharmaceuticals, pharmacists are key to ensuring safe, cost-effective drug therapy for Canadians.

## Accessible Health Care Providers

Pharmacists are the most accessible health care professionals in Canada, dispensing and providing advice on 600 million prescriptions a year. Canada has almost 39,000 pharmacists, which are distributed across three major groups – about 70% of pharmacists work in community pharmacies, 15% work in hospitals, and the remainder work in other settings such as the pharmaceutical industry, government, associations, colleges and universities.



**38,737**

Licensed Pharmacists in Canada



**4,349**

Licensed Pharmacy Technicians in Canada



**9,843**

Licensed Pharmacies in Canada

### Family Pharmacists

Pharmacists are conveniently located in every community across the country and often the first point of contact most Canadians have with the health care system.

In a 2015 survey of Canadian's perceptions and attitudes towards pharmacists, 89% of respondents said they generally go to the same pharmacy, 51% indicated that they visit a pharmacy at least once a month and 36% of respondents indicated that they know their pharmacist by name.

## An Expanding Role

The pharmacist's traditional role is expanding and pharmacists across Canada now deliver a range of innovative services, including:

- Medication reviews
- Chronic disease management
- Immunization services
- Wellness programs
- Ordering and interpreting lab tests

Most provincial governments have approved pharmacist prescribing with varying scopes of authority, a service that complements the care provided by a doctor and can result in more convenient refills, less time spend dealing with prescription changes and collaborative medication management.

### Pharmacists' Scope of Practice in Canada

2016	2016												
	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	NWT	YT	NU
Initiate drug therapy independently	X	✓	L	L	X	X	L	L	X	X	X	X	X
Prescribe for minor ailments/conditions	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Make therapeutic substitution	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Change drug dosage/formulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Renew/extend prescriptions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Administer a drug by injection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	L	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Order and interpret lab tests	X	✓	P	L	X	✓	P	✓	P	X	X	X	X
Regulated Pharmacy Technicians	✓	✓	✓	L	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X

While the number and scope of services that pharmacists can provide to patients varies across Canada, the trends have all been the same – increasingly governments are recognizing the value of pharmacists and the key role they play in a sustainable health care system.

