Ready or not?
Pharmacist perceptions of a changing injection scope of practice before it happens

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RPh Injections in Ontario

2012: ON pharmacists can give flu shots

April 2016: Proposed expanded scope + online public consultation

Dec 2016: Expanded scope granted
Feedback for Proposed Changes to the Pharmacy Act (Administration of Vaccines by Pharmacists)

1. **Pharmacist** · March 31, 2016

I believe that the intended changes to the Pharmacy Act with respect to the expansion of the injection privileges for pharmacists would greatly enhance the care we provide to the public. However, I believe that pharmacists should have the right to prescribe the injections as well. This would make it more convenient for patients to receive these potentially life-saving vaccines. I understand and would be willing to participate in additional training to have the right to prescribe.

   [Read More]

2. **Pharmacist** · April 2, 2016

This makes complete sense. We now have Registered Pharmacy Technicians so have more opportunities to deliver these services. I agree that Pharmacist interns should also be able to administer injections but not Pharmacy students as they would have to complete extensive training and this would only make the process more efficient and effective.
Objective
To explore the factors that influence Ontario pharmacists to adopt or reject expanded vaccine scope using data from the public consultation.
Methods

Four researchers independently coded responses in 2 ways:

1. Sentiment analysis
   - 1: Very positive
   - 2: Moderately positive
   - 3: Neutral
   - 4: Moderately negative
   - 5: Very negative

2. Using the 5 domains of Roger’s *Diffusion of Innovations* theory
Everett Roger’s *Diffusion of Innovations* Theory

Adoption: How and why people make a new practice part of their life

Depends on the innovation, the person, the environment, how the idea is spread
5 characteristics of an innovation (e.g., new scope) that influence adoption:

1. Relative advantage
2. Complexity
3. Compatibility
4. Trialability
5. Observability
Participants (N=307)

Pharmacists, 270
Organizations, 16
Public, 12
Technicians, 9

Pharmacists, 270
Sentiment Analysis (N=307)

Mean: 2.01

1. Very positive
2. Moderately positive
3. Neutral
4. Moderately negative
5. Very negative
Characteristic 1: Relative advantage

Patients
Pharmacists
Physicians
Health system

“…much more accessible to the public, no appointments, longer hours, close to home, accessible, and provided by a trusted professional with whom the patient already has an established relationship.”

– Pharmacist (239)
Characteristic 1: Relative (dis)advantage

Increased workload
Patient safety concerns

“I have been working through flu season year after year without additional tech hours. Added duties and no additional help, a dispensing error is more likely to occur.”

– Pharmacist (49)
Characteristic 2: Complexity

Complexity of travel medicine

“Travel medicine is a specialty within the medical profession…It is much more detailed than most pharmacists think.”
– Pharmacist (7)

Simplicity of vaccination

“It’s not a procedure, or a surgery, it’s just a vaccination.”
– Pharmacist (10)
Characteristic 3: Compatibility

“a no-brainer”
“the logical next step”
“a natural progression of our responsibilities”
“makes sense”
Characteristic 3: Compatibility

Less time for medication management

“Pharmacists are now stuck jabbing people every fall, instead of managing drug therapy, which is what they should be doing”
– Pharmacist (63)

Lack of prescribing rights

“The ability to have pharmacists prescribe all of the entities would be logical – how exactly would we be alleviating the burden on the healthcare system if we still need to send the patient to the doctor for [a prescription]?”
– Pharmacist (124)
Characteristic 4: Trialability

Success of flu shot program
Want better reimbursement than for flu shots
Already vaccinating under medical directives or direct orders

“Unlike flu shots, these vaccines should not be a loss leader. Pharmacists are worth more than that.”
– Pharmacist (32)
Characteristic 5: Observability

Increased vaccinations in rural areas
Better follow-up

“Pharmacists do a much better job of following up with callbacks and reminders to ensure patients receive their full injection series in the appropriate timeline, leading to fewer incompletes.”

– Pharmacist (123)
Limitations

• Open consultation format
  • Unable to clarify phrases such as “enhance the care we provide to the public” and “reduce the burden on the health system”
  • Unable to clarify topics of misunderstanding (prescribing)
• Convenience sample resulted in response bias
• Few responses from other health care providers and the public
Considerations for Policy

- Lack of prescribing rights: 10/13 vaccines need a prescription
- Would increase workload leading to patient safety concerns
  - Quotas in chain pharmacies
  - No access to charts or electronic health records
- Reimbursement
  - Administration
  - Publically-funded vaccines
Conclusion

Expanded vaccine scope should be well-received by ON pharmacists

Convenience and accessibility are clear benefits

Anticipate challenges around prescribing rights, employers’ response, patient safety, and pharmacy infrastructure
Contact

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