

***Professional Competencies  
for  
Canadian Pharmacy Technicians  
at  
Entry to Practice***

**September 2007**



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## **Background**

The National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) was formed in February 1995 as an umbrella organization of Canada's provincial pharmacy regulatory bodies. The mission of our association is to facilitate the activities of provincial pharmacy regulatory authorities in their service of public interest. NAPRA accomplishes this by:

- representing the interests of the member organizations;
- serving as a national resource centre; and
- promoting the harmonization of legislation and standards

These national competencies for pharmacy technicians were developed in 2007 as a response to changing pharmacist and technician roles and greater complexity in the pharmacy practice environment. For the past thirty years, pharmacy technicians have supported the pharmacist role; however, as pharmacists engage in full utilization of their knowledge, skills, and abilities, so will pharmacy technicians; thus, both roles need to be expanded. The Ontario College of Pharmacists (2003) and the Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians, Alberta (2004) developed competency profiles to describe the role of pharmacy technicians in their provinces; and, each of these provinces developed an examination process.

The federal Agreement on Internal Trade (Chapter Seven, Labour Mobility), specifies that any worker qualified for an occupation in one province or territory should be granted access to employment in that occupation in any other province or territory in Canada. NAPRA believes that this national competency profile, developed by pharmacy technicians and other stakeholders, is a critical step in recognizing the increasingly complex knowledge and skills in the pharmacy practice environment, establishing pharmacy technician qualifications at a national level, and promoting the ability of provinces and territories to meet the terms of the federal Agreement on Internal Trade. These competencies simultaneously frame the requirements for entry into a regulated health profession, the examinations required to enter the profession, and the standards for program accreditation. The competencies comply with national and provincial/territorial legislation and may assist in developing or revising legislation and regulatory authorities' standards, bylaws, ethics, and codes of conduct.

Representatives of the pharmacy profession from all Canadian jurisdictions (except the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut) revised these competencies during a workshop hosted by NAPRA in June 2007 and by electronic consultation.

## **A Vision for Pharmacy Practice**

### **A Changing Pharmacy Profession in Canada<sup>1</sup>**

The demands on the health care system and the changes in the delivery of health care require effective use of human resources, individually and in teams, to provide patient-centred, outcomes-focused care and to optimize the safe and effective preparation, distribution, and use of medications. Pharmacists will play an increasingly important role in medication management, spending more time managing drug therapy issues and monitoring drug therapy outcomes in collaboration with patients, caregivers, physicians, and other health care providers. The Canadian Pharmacists Association, when envisioning pharmacy practice states, “Pharmacists will have prescribing rights, greater authority to order tests, and access to relevant patient information through electronic health records (including test results, treatment indication.)”<sup>2</sup> Pharmacists are poised to play a prominent role in health promotion, disease prevention, and chronic disease management.

Expanding the roles and responsibilities for pharmacy technicians as regulated health care professionals will play an integral part of this more fully realized patient-centred and outcomes-based care. Furthermore, enhancing pharmacy technician practice, including roles in automated dispensing and computer technologies, will continue to protect the safety, security, and integrity of information and the drug distribution systems. As regulated health professionals, pharmacy technicians will be responsible and accountable to patients through legislation and the standards, bylaws, regulatory authority in their province or territory.

### **Vision for Pharmacy Technicians**

As reflected in the competencies for entry into practice, pharmacy technicians will work in collaborative relationships and will be committed to patient-centred, outcomes-focused care. Their expertise will focus on the knowledge, skills, and abilities related to technical aspects of prescription and patient information, and of product and drug distribution. Pharmacy technicians will be responsible and accountable for ensuring patient safety and for the accuracy and quality of product preparation and release. They will collaborate with pharmacists in the promotion of wellness, disease prevention, chronic disease management, and supporting the autonomy of patients.

### **Competencies for Entry Level Pharmacy Technicians**

Recognizing that pharmacy technicians have varying backgrounds of education and training, these competencies describe their primary functions and activities and reflect

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *Blueprint for Pharmacy – Draft for Pharmacy Consultation*, Canadian Pharmacists Association, May 25 2007.

<sup>2</sup> *Blueprint for Pharmacy – Draft for Pharmacy Consultation*, Canadian Pharmacists Association, May 25 2007

the common and essential knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes at the point of entry into the profession required to benefit the Canadian public. Pharmacy technicians work in collaborative relationships in which, given the situation and the extent of professional judgment required, their decision-making and activities are carried out independently or as a team member.

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions are crucial overarching concepts that guide the competency development process and must be considered while reading the detailed competencies that follow. These assumptions have been adopted from two essential documents: *Professional Competencies for Canadian Pharmacists at Entry to Practice (NAPRA, Second Revision, March 2007)* and *National Educational Outcomes for Pharmacy Technician Programs in Canada (Canadian Pharmacy Technician Educators Association, 2007)*. Both these documents are available on the website of the respective organizations.

#### **Pharmacists:**

1. have responsibility for patient care through direct assessment and intervention.
2. are health professionals who practice within a knowledge-based environment in which they use high-level critical thinking, specialized knowledge of drug therapy, and professional judgment appropriate to the pharmacist role to offer and optimize patient care.
3. are accountable for direct patient care knowledge.
4. practise in accordance with professional registration and licensure, and professional standards within his/her jurisdiction.
5. possess both broad-based and pharmacy specific knowledge
6. mentor pharmacists, pharmacy students or interns, pharmacy technicians, and others.
7. take responsibility for their continuing professional development and commit to life-long learning.

#### **Pharmacy Technicians:**

1. have responsibility for patient care and to the circle of care through collaborative relationships with pharmacists.
2. are health professionals who use their knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to think critically, solve problems, make decisions, and generate professional judgments appropriate to the pharmacy technician role that optimize patient care.
3. recognize and differentiate practice situations within the collaborative relationship in which they make decisions and take action independently, those that require pharmacist intervention; and those that are team based in nature.
4. are accountable for respecting and supporting the role, rights, and responsibilities of patients, pharmacy technicians, the pharmacy team, health care providers, and others.

5. practise in accordance with provincial/territorial professional requirements, standards, bylaws, and policies.
6. possess pharmacy specific knowledge, skill, abilities, and attitudes related to technical and distributive aspects.
7. act as mentors to pharmacy technicians, pharmacy technician students, and others.
8. collaborate with and are an integral part of the health care team.
9. take responsibility for their continuing professional development and commit to life-long learning.

In some jurisdictions, *pharmacy technician* is a professional title protected by legislation.

**Professional Competencies for Canadian Pharmacy Technicians at Entry to Practice:**

1. describe the roles and responsibilities that pharmacy technicians perform.
2. are performance statements describing significant job related knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and/or judgments required for competent performance.

**Purpose of this Document:**

This competencies document is a foundational document developed for a number of specific purposes:

- to support the development of a national accreditation standard for pharmacy technician educational programs (under the authority of the Canadian Council on Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs);
- to support the development of a national entry to practice examination for pharmacy technicians (being developed by the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada); and
- to support national educational outcomes for pharmacy technician programs (developed by the Canadian Pharmacy Technician Educators Association).

These competencies have been written assuming pharmacy technicians will be a regulated profession. In those jurisdictions where this occurs, these competencies may assist in the development of standards of practice for pharmacy technicians.

These competencies may assist in the development of transitional “bridging” educational programs to assist those pharmacy technicians who wish to become regulated in meeting the requirements established by their regulatory body.

These competencies do not authorize pharmacy technicians to immediately assume expanded roles. As well, these competencies do not authorize pharmacists or any other health professionals to immediately delegate responsibility for activities to pharmacy technicians.

## Glossary

### Circle of Care

All members of the health care team who have direct responsibilities for providing care to an individual.

(*Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

### Collaborative Relationship

A relationship between two or more health professionals that is developed to:

- facilitate communication.
- determine mutual goals of therapy that are acceptable to the patient.
- share relevant information.
- establish the expectations of each participant.

(Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

### Competency Profile

A summary of the professional role that includes the competency statements, units, and elements that describe the professional knowledge, attributes, and expected performance of pharmacy technicians entering an expanded and regulated professional role. Framing this competency profile are patient safety, provision of optimal care, legislation, professional and collaborative relationships, critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills, and professional judgement. This profile describes specialized knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes required for competent performance and it reflects the pharmacy technician role in diverse situations and pharmacy practice settings.

- **Competency Statement:** A significant job component requiring the application and integration of relevant knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and/or judgments.
- **Competency Unit:** A major segment of an overall competency that describes a key activity necessary to carry out that competency.
- **Competency Element:** A sub-section of a competency unit describing or detailing the key performance indicators of the expected activity.

(Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

### Continuing Professional Development

The means by which individual pharmacy technicians maintain and enhance their own competence.

(Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

### **Critical-Thinking**

The ability to solve problems and make decisions safely and appropriately, resulting in professional judgements that take into account knowledge and information, context and standards, experience and observations, and actions and reflection.

### **Drug Therapy Related Problem**

A drug related problem is an undesirable event experienced by a patient that involves, or is suspected to involve drug therapy, and that actually or potentially interferes with desired patient outcomes. (Strand et al, 1996). These may include allergic reactions, adverse reactions, drug interactions, lack of adherence to drug therapy, problems related to dosage, the possibility of the patient taking the drug for no medically valid reason, or the possibility of the patient requiring drug therapy.

### **Drug Distribution System**

A system designed to facilitate the safe transfer of a medication from the manufacturer to the patient in a manner that preserves both the integrity of the medication and the safety of the patient. Steps in the drug distribution system include manufacturing, storage, procurement, dispensing, administration, and returns.

*(Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).*

### **Independent Double Check**

An independent double check is a process in which a second authorized individual conducts a verification. Such verification can be performed in the presence or absence of the first authorized individual. In either case, the most critical aspect is to maximize the independence of the double check by ensuring that the first authorized individual does not communicate what he or she *expects* the second authorized individual to see, which would create bias and reduce the visibility of an error. (adapted from Institute for Safe Medications Practices Canada, 2005)

### **The Health Care Professional**

Professionals within the patient's circle of care.

*(Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).*

### **Legislation**

Statutes and regulations made under those statutes.

*(Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).*

### **Patient<sup>3</sup>**

Any person or authorized agent who is provided a product and/or service that is within the practice of pharmacy. The authorized agent refers to a family member, caregiver, or another person who has a close personal relationship with the patient and whom that patient has endorsed for this purpose.

(Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

### **Patient Record<sup>4</sup>**

A record that contains patient demographics, profile of medications provided, and other patient-specific information regarding care that is needed and/or provided. A patient record may include information such as name and contact information, third party insurance, allergies, intolerances, previous adverse effects, details of current and past medication regimens, past medical history, immunization records, laboratory results, and treatment and monitoring plans.

### **Practice Setting**

Pharmacy technicians work in a wide variety of practice sites including those in community pharmacy and pharmacies in hospitals or other health care institutions such as a long-term care facility. With experience or further education, pharmacy technicians may be employed in education, research, consulting and family health centres, and pharmaceutical and third party insurance corporations.

(Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

### **Prescription**

An order given by a practitioner directing that a stated amount of any drug or mixture of drugs specified therein be dispensed for the person named in the order.

(*Regulations to the Food and Drug Act*, December 29, 1960.)

### **Product**

Any drug product purchased commercially from a pharmaceutical manufacturer or prepared in a pharmacy. Products may include point-of-care home monitoring, drug delivery devices, supplies, and medical equipment.

(*National Educational Outcomes for Pharmacy Technician Programs in Canada*, Canadian Pharmacy Technician Educators Association, 2007.)

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<sup>3</sup> In this document, the terms 'patient', 'client, and 'customer' are synonymous and preferred use will depend on the jurisdiction or practice setting. Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007.

<sup>4</sup> In this document, the terms 'patient record' and 'patient profile' are synonymous and preferred use will depend on the jurisdiction or practice setting.

**Program Accreditation**

A pharmacy technician program that is accredited by the Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP), or  
Accredited by a body recognized by CCAPP, or  
Determined to be equivalent to a CCAPP accredited program by a Provincial Pharmacy Regulatory Authority, or  
Determined to be equivalent to a CCAPP accredited program by the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC).  
(Adapted from *Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

**Quality Assurance**

The technical, operational and managerial activities aiming to ensure that all products and services reaching the patient are safe, effective and acceptable.  
(*Professional Competencies for Pharmacists at Entry to Practice, Second Revision*, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, March 2007).

## **Competency Categories**

### ***Legal, Ethical, and Professional Responsibilities***

Pharmacy technicians meet legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities in the performance of their practice.

#### **Competency Units**

- 1.1 Meet legal requirements.
- 1.2 Uphold and act on ethical principles.
- 1.3 Demonstrate professionalism.

### ***Professional Collaboration and Team Work***

Pharmacy technicians work in collaborative relationships within health care teams to optimize patient safety and improve health outcomes.

#### **Competency Unit**

- 2.1 Collaborate to meet patient health care needs, goals, and outcomes.

### ***Drug Distribution: Prescription and Patient Information***

Pharmacy technicians promote safe and effective drug distribution by receiving, gathering, entering, and storing prescription and patient information so that this information can be accessed and retrieved readily.

#### **Competency Units**

- 3.1 Receive a prescription.
- 3.2 Process the prescription.
- 3.3 Transfer prescription authorizations to another pharmacy provider at the patient's request.

### ***Drug Distribution: Product Preparation***

Pharmacy technicians promote safe and effective drug distribution by preparing products in a manner that ensures patient safety through the accuracy and quality of the product.

#### **Competency Unit**

- 4.1 Select, Prepare, and Package Products for Release.

***Drug Distribution: Product Release***

Pharmacy technicians promote safe and effective drug distribution by releasing and distributing products in a manner that ensures patient safety.

**Competency Units**

- 5.1 Ensure accuracy and quality of the final product.
- 5.2 Collaborate with the pharmacist in the release of the product.
- 5.3 Document all aspects of drug distribution activities.

***Drug Distribution: System and Inventory Controls***

Pharmacy technicians collaborate in the management of systems for drug distribution and inventory control to ensure patient safety and the safety, accuracy, quality, integrity, and timeliness of the products.

**Competency Units**

- 6.1 Manage the drug distribution system.
- 6.2 Manage inventory.

***Communication and Education***

Pharmacy technicians communicate effectively with patients, pharmacists, and other health care team members, and educate, where appropriate, in order to promote and support optimal patient care and well-being.

**Competency Units**

- 7.1 Establish and maintain effective communications.
- 7.2 Provide information and education.
- 7.3 Document, in compliance with legislation, standards, policies, and procedures.

***Management Knowledge and Skills***

Pharmacy technicians apply management knowledge, principles, and skills.

**Competency Units**

- 8.1 Manage operations occurring within their practice environment.
- 8.2 Manage administrative activities occurring within their practice environment.
- 8.3 Manage financial elements associated with the processing of prescriptions.

***Quality Assurance***

Pharmacy technicians collaborate in developing, implementing, and evaluating quality assurance and risk management policies, procedures, and activities.

**Competency Units**

- 9.1 Participate in quality assurance processes.
- 9.2 Ensure the safety and integrity of pharmaceutical products.
- 9.3 Contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe working environment and conditions.

## **Competency #1    *Legal, Ethical, and Professional Responsibilities***

Pharmacy technicians meet legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities in the performance of their practice.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **1.1        Meet legal requirements.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 1.1.1        Comply with legal requirements including federal and provincial/territorial legislation, policies, by-laws, and standards applicable to pharmacy practice.
- 1.1.2        Protect patient confidentiality according to applicable federal and provincial/territorial privacy legislation.
- 1.1.3        Comply with applicable federal and provincial/territorial workplace and occupational health and safety legislation.
- 1.1.4        Provide prescription and personal health information upon request and where allowed.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **1.2        Uphold and act on ethical principles.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 1.2.1        Be accountable to patients.
  - i.    advocate on behalf of patients.
  - ii.   involve patients in decision making.
  - iii.  respect patients' rights to make their own choices.
  - iv.   consider patient-specific circumstances.
- 1.2.2        Question, report, and assist in the resolution of potential and actual unsafe, illegal, unethical, or unprofessional actions or situations.
  - i.    identify, report, and correct errors, omissions, and unsafe practices or situations.
  - ii.   identify and report conduct that is illegal, unethical, or unprofessional to the appropriate authorities.
  - iii.  document the incident and actions taken.
- 1.2.3        Demonstrate personal and professional integrity.

- i. accept responsibility and accountability for actions and decisions.
- ii. show sensitivity to and respect for the patient's dignity, values and diversity.
- iii. maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- iv. practise within personal limits of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

## **Competency Unit**

### **1.3 Demonstrate professionalism.**

#### **Competency Elements**

- 1.3.1 Accept responsibility and accountability for own actions and decisions including the safety of patient, self, and others.
- 1.3.2 Seek guidance from another pharmacy technician or a pharmacist when uncertain about own knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- 1.3.3 Seek out and use appropriate information and/or resources.
- 1.3.4 Promote understanding of the pharmacy technician role and its relationship to the roles of other health care providers.
- 1.3.5 Act as a mentor for pharmacy technician students and other pharmacy technicians.
- 1.3.6 Engage in continuing professional development.
  - i. assess own learning needs.
  - ii. develop a plan to meet learning needs.
  - iii. seek and evaluate learning opportunities to enhance practice.
  - iv. incorporate learning into practice.
- 1.3.8 Demonstrate a commitment to the health system and the role of the pharmacy technician and other health care professionals within it.
- 1.3.9 Support and participate in the affairs of organizations working to advance the educational and professional interests of pharmacy technicians.

## **Competency #2 Professional Collaboration and Team Work**

Pharmacy technicians work in collaborative relationships within health care teams to optimize patient safety and improve health outcomes.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **2.1 Collaborate to meet patient health care needs, goals, and outcomes.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 2.1.1. Develop collaborative relationships with pharmacists and other health care professionals.
- 2.1.2. Participate in the circle of care to promote patient health and wellness.
- 2.1.3. Cooperate with and show respect for all members of the inter-professional team.
  - i. make expertise available to others.
  - ii. share relevant information.
  - iii. contribute to achieving mutually determined goals and objectives.
  - iv. support other professionals and accept their support to optimize health outcomes.
- 2.1.4. Refer patients to other health care professionals when required.
  - i. determine if referral is necessary
  - ii. collaborate with the pharmacist to identify the most appropriate health care provider for referral.
  - iii. recognize and refer situations requiring the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a pharmacist to the pharmacist.
  - iv. work with other health care providers to achieve the desired health outcomes.
- 2.1.5. Understand, participate in, and promote patient safety initiatives.
- 2.1.6. Participate as a team member in organized initiatives for disaster and emergency preparedness.

## **Competency #3 *Drug Distribution: Prescription and Patient Information***

Pharmacy technicians promote safe and effective drug distribution by receiving, gathering, entering, and storing prescription and patient information so that this information can be easily accessed and retrieved.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **3.1 Receive a prescription.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 3.1.1 Create and/or maintain a patient record.
  - i. confirm identity, gather, review, and update patient demographics, health history, confirmed allergies, medication use, and third party payment information.
- 3.1.2 Assess prescription for clarity, completeness, authenticity, and legal requirements.
  - i. verify the identity and the legitimacy of the prescriber, the authenticity of the prescriber's signature, and the source (origin) of the prescription
  - ii. verify the integrity of the prescription by inspecting each prescription visually for signs of tampering.
- 3.1.3 Consult with the patient, pharmacist, or prescriber when required.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **3.2 Process the prescription.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 3.2.1 Assess the prescription and determine processing priority.
- 3.2.2 Interpret the prescription including abbreviations, numerals, and symbols including metric, household, Imperial, and apothecary.
- 3.2.3 Perform pharmaceutical calculations.
- 3.2.4 Ensure the prescription information is recorded accurately on patient records.

- 3.2.5 Alert the pharmacist to actual and potential drug therapy related problems.

### **Competency Unit**

- 3.3 Transfer prescription authorizations to another pharmacy provider at patients' requests.**

### **Competency Elements**

- 3.3.1 Determine the legality and appropriateness of the request.
- 3.3.2 Document transfers.

## Competency #4 *Drug Distribution: Product Preparation*

Pharmacy technicians promote safe and effective drug distribution by preparing products in a manner that ensures patient safety through the accuracy and quality of the product.

### Competency Unit

#### 4.1 Select, Prepare, and Package Products for Release.

##### Competency Elements

- 4.1.1 Select appropriate products/brands.
  - i. apply knowledge of brand and generic names, dosages, and dosage form in product selection.
  - ii. determine drug interchangeability based on formulary policies.
  - iii. handle hazardous drugs safely.
  - iv. ensure the integrity, stability, and where applicable, sterility of products, for example, by checking expiry dates, colour, odour, etc.
  
- 4.1.2 Retrieve, count, pour, weigh, or measure commercially available products.
  
- 4.1.3 Prepare non-sterile and sterile products.
  - i. determine the suitable environment/conditions, equipment, and formulation procedures and techniques required to prepare or compound products.
  - ii. use clean technique when compounding non-sterile preparations.
  - iii. use aseptic technique when compounding sterile preparations.
  - iv. calculate amounts for each ingredient required for the compound, ensure accuracy of the calculations, and document.
  - v. document the source, expiration dates, and lot numbers of each ingredient used.
  - vi. mix, reconstitute, or compound products according to established formulations, guidelines, policies, and procedures.
  - vii. identify an appropriate expiration date, storage, and handling conditions for compounded products.
  
- 4.1.4 Package products to maintain integrity.
  - i. select package based on quantity, stability, safety, legislative requirements, and patients' requirements.
  - ii. label according to legislative requirements and established protocols, for example, bar code, batch lot, expiry, sterility, and auxiliary and safety labels.

## **Competency #5    *Drug Distribution: Product Release***

Pharmacy technicians promote safe and effective drug distribution by releasing and distributing products in a manner that ensures patient safety.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **5.1        Ensure accuracy and quality of the final product.**

##### **Competency Element**

- 5.1.1        Verify the product against the prescription and/or formulation information.
- i.        using an independent double check.
  - ii.        document actions taken.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **5.2        Collaborate with the pharmacist in the release of the product.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 5.2.1        Confirm that the pharmacist has reviewed the prescription and the patient record.
- 5.2.2        Confirm that patients have been provided consultation with the pharmacist when:
- the pharmacist is required to counsel or has indicated a concern.
  - a concern has been recognized by the pharmacy technician.
  - patients have indicated concerns.
- 5.2.3        Release/distribute the checked pharmaceutical product to the right patient, health care personnel, facility, or authorized person.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **5.3        Document all aspects of drug distribution activities.**

## **Competency #6 *Drug Distribution: System and Inventory Controls***

Pharmacy technicians collaborate in the management of systems for drug distribution and inventory control to ensure patient safety and the safety, accuracy, quality, integrity, and timeliness of the product.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **6.1 Manage the drug distribution system.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 6.1.1 Recognize and respond to individual patient needs.
- 6.1.2 Contribute to the implementation and maintenance of safe and effective systems of drug supply and distribution including unit dose, ward stock, automated distribution, compliance packaging, etc. . . .
- 6.1.3 Follow distribution policies and procedures.
- 6.1.4 Recognize and respond to unusual patterns of drug distribution including diversion, drug misuse, and fluctuations in utilization

### **Competency Unit**

#### **6.2 Manage inventory.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 6.2.1 Employ inventory management systems and strategies that incorporate best practice approaches for ensuring patient safety.
- 6.2.2 Determine and maintain inventory requirements sufficient for patient safety and efficient operations.
  - i. set order limits and calculate replenishment orders.
  - ii. prepare and place orders for stock and supplies from licensed and legitimate pharmaceutical suppliers/sources and in compliance with relevant legislation.
  - iii. acquire, receive, verify, and store stock and supplies purchased and investigate and resolve discrepancies.
  - iv. ensure that receipt and storage of all medications complies with legislative requirements and policies and procedures.

- v. identify, report, and remove defective, unsafe, and recalled products.
  - vi. dispose of, destroy, or return expired, unusable products, and complete recalls of products according to legislation and policies and procedures.
- 6.2.3 Audit inventory and report any discrepancies.
- i. reconcile inventory for narcotic, controlled, targeted-controlled substances, and any other products as selected.
  - ii. identify, investigate, and report any discrepancies to a pharmacist or appropriate authority.
- 6.2.4 Maintain an inventory information system so that the information can be retrieved easily.
- 6.2.5 Complete all documentation pertaining to inventory management including narcotics, controlled, targeted-controlled, investigational, special access, and hazardous drugs.

## **Competency #7    *Communication and Education***

Pharmacy technicians communicate effectively with patients, pharmacists, other health care team members, and educate, where appropriate, in order to promote and support optimal patient care and well-being.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **7.1        Establish and maintain effective communications.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 7.1.1        Use effective communication skills.
- i.    demonstrate comprehension and proficiency in written and verbal English or French.
  - ii.   demonstrate appropriate verbal, non-verbal, and listening skills
  - iii.   display clear, concise, and effective writing skills.
  - iv.   select appropriate communication techniques for use with patients and other health care professionals.
- 7.1.2        Develop professional relationships with patients and health care professionals.
- i.    establish and maintain rapport by using effective communication techniques
    - verbal, non-verbal, and/or written communications.
    - active listening skills.
    - appropriate language/terminology.
    - adapting communication strategies to meet the needs of diversity.
  - ii.   demonstrate sensitivity, respect and empathy when communicating.
  - iii.   demonstrate an understanding of the impact that individual differences have on communication.
  - iv.   conduct interpersonal interactions and manage conflict, in a professional manner.
- 7.1.3        Coordinate written, electronic, and oral communications throughout the practice setting.

## **Competency Unit**

### **7.2 Provide information and education.**

#### **Competency Elements**

- 7.2.1 Identify and respond to the learning needs of participants.
- 7.2.2 Coordinate or participate in health promotion and education for individuals and groups.
- 7.2.3 Assess personal abilities to carry out a particular educational plan.
- 7.2.4 Assist patients to select and use drug administration devices, diagnostic and monitoring devices, home health aids, and other non-drug measures.

## **Competency Unit**

### **7.3 Document, in compliance with legislation, standards, policies, and procedures.**

#### **Competency Element**

- 7.3.1 Document information, procedures, and actions accurately, clearly, and in a timely manner.

## **Competency #8    *Management Knowledge and Skills***

Pharmacy technicians apply management knowledge, principles, and skills.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **8.1        *Manage operations occurring within their practice environment.***

##### **Competency Elements**

- 8.1.1        Manage workflow by using effective prioritization, organizational, and time-management skills.
- 8.1.2        Supervise personnel so that accepted standards are met.
- 8.1.3        Schedule and perform routine equipment maintenance to ensure proper functioning and accuracy.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **8.2        *Manage administrative activities occurring within their practice environment.***

##### **Competency Elements**

- 8.2.1        Use health information systems.
- 8.2.2        Prepare reports and documents.
- 8.2.3        Organize, file and store documents according to legal requirements and in a manner where they can be retrieved readily.
- 8.2.4        Maintain current written manuals, records, policies, and procedures.

## **Competency Unit**

### **8.3 Manage financial elements associated with the processing of prescriptions.**

#### **Competency Elements**

- 8.3.1 Initiate billing, verify, and assist in the adjudication for payment.
- 8.3.2 Resolve billing/adjudication issues encountered in the processing of prescriptions. apply knowledge of formularies and their policies, benefit lists, generic substitutions, deductible limits, and quantity limits.
  - i. apply knowledge of formularies and their policies, benefit lists, generic substitutions, deductible limits, and quantity limits.
  - ii. assist patients in understanding the scope, limitations and exceptions to their third-party insurance plan coverage.
  - iii. assist other health care team members in understanding the limitations and exceptions to an organization's formulary or of a third-party insurance plan coverage of medications and medication devices.

## **Competency #9    *Quality Assurance***

Pharmacy technicians collaborate in developing, implementing, and evaluating quality assurance and risk management policies, procedures, and activities.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **9.1        Participate in quality assurance processes.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 9.1.1        Identify and respond to actual or potential problems within the drug distribution system.
- i.    acknowledge the problem.
  - ii.   collaborate to assess and resolve problems.
  - iii.   participate in the implementation of measures to prevent occurrences or reoccurrences.
  - iv.   report and document problems and resolutions.
- 9.1.2        Contribute to organized initiatives to evaluate and improve the quality and safety of the medication use within the practice environment and the health care system.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **9.2        Ensure the safety and integrity of pharmaceutical products.**

##### **Competency Elements**

- 9.2.1        Ensure the cleanliness, functionality, and integrity of compounding, packaging, dispensing, and storage equipment.
- 9.2.2        Store and transport pharmaceutical products under the appropriate conditions including temperature, light, humidity, security and package, sanitation, safety, and infection control precautions.

### **Competency Unit**

#### **9.3        Contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe working environment and conditions.**