

PACE Assessment Criteria (Pharmacy Technician Applicants)

The following chart outlines the assessment criteria used by a Practice Assessment of Competence at Entry (PACE) assessor when conducting a PACE assessment of a pharmacy technician applicant. Assessors will focus on 5 key competency domains adapted from the entry-to-practice competencies¹ and the educational outcomes for Canadian pharmacy technicians². Under each domain, there are specific elements listed which broadly describe the minimum practice requirement; each element must be demonstrated and rated during a PACE assessment. The behavioural indicators are examples of specific activities that could be used to demonstrate competence of the related element and may differ depending on the type of practice site (i.e., community/LTC vs. hospital). Assessors may use their judgment to identify other activities at their type of practice site that demonstrate competence of a particular element. PACE candidates should use these criteria to better understand and prepare for their PACE assessment.

Providing Care		
Element	Behavioural Indicators	
1.1	Gathers Patient Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathers information required to provide pharmacy-related services, create a complete patient record/profile, and/or verify current data on an existing patient record/profile. • Obtains accurate and comprehensive personal and health information required for reconciliation from multiple sources, including the patient/caregiver interview and prescription vials, multi-medication compliance aids, other healthcare providers, etc. • Investigates to clarify patient details and/or to obtain patient information.
1.2	Supports Care Plan Activities ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers actual and potential care-related issues to the pharmacist in a clear, concise and timely manner, ensuring effective communication within the healthcare team.² • Collaborates with health care professionals to address patient care needs, including helping to obtain medication to ensure safe and effective care. • Acknowledges and responds appropriately to the needs, values and desired level of care, actively involving patients, caregivers and healthcare providers in the decision-making process. • Educates patients through demonstrations of drug administration devices, monitoring devices, and health compliance aids, encouraging them to actively participate in their care with relevant resources and information.
Communication		
Element	Behavioural Indicators	
2.1	Demonstrates Communication Skills (Verbally and Non-Verbally)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates effectively with attention to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ tone, speed, and audience • Demonstrates empathy and tact. • Uses non-verbal skills appropriately (i.e., eye contact, posture, hand gestures and personal space). • Tailors communication to specific contexts and situations.

Communication - continued		
Element		Behavioural Indicators
2.2	Completes Documentation†	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents practice activities utilizing a paper-based system and/or an electronic Health Information System (HIS) in a professional, timely, and retrievable manner.⁴ • Documents according to legal requirements and standards of practice. • Documentation (handwritten and/or electronic) is clear, concise, organized, and appropriately addresses any issues or concerns.⁴ Handwritten notes are legible.
Professionalism		
Element		Behavioural Indicators
3.1	Applies Regulations & Ethical Principles in Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices in accordance with legal requirements and standards of practice. • Accepts responsibility and accountability for patient care needs within their scope of practice, and appropriately consults the pharmacist when necessary. • Maintains patient confidentiality. • Applies ethical principles in daily work^{1, 2} including, but not limited to, protecting the best interests of patients, striving to do no harm, respecting patient rights to quality care, and being accountable for their own actions and behaviours.⁵ • Takes appropriate steps to address actions and situations that are unethical.^{1, 2, 3}
3.2	Demonstrates an Awareness of One's Own Practice Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies when own knowledge and skills are insufficient to manage a situation. • Utilizes various strategies to manage such situations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seeking out appropriate evidence-based resources to address gaps in knowledge and skills. ○ Refers nursing staff, another healthcare professional or a patient to the pharmacist when a situation falls outside their scope of practice
3.3	Demonstrates Professional Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates honesty and integrity in all interactions within the healthcare environment • Demonstrates caring for patients (e.g., compassionate, empathetic, respectful of diversity, supportive, and polite in all interactions). • Demonstrates appropriate work ethic (e.g., timeliness, dress code) and self-awareness (e.g., email/phone/social media use in professional settings). • Establishes and maintains professional boundaries with patients and the healthcare team.

†Documentation is inclusive of both handwritten and electronic formats.

Professional Collaboration		
Element		Behavioural Indicators
4.1	Develops & Promotes Inter- and Intra-professional Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates with pharmacy and healthcare team members for the benefit of the patient. • Actively shares knowledge and expertise with other team members within scope of practice. • Respects the role of the pharmacist and other health care practitioners.
4.2	Fulfills Professional Roles & Responsibilities within Healthcare Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands extent of scope of practice and can articulate it.^{3, 6} • Actively fulfills own roles and responsibilities. • Accepts responsibility for activities within scope of practice.
Product Distribution		
Element		Behavioural Indicators
5.1	Processes Prescriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifies patient information and ensures prescriptions/orders are authentic and complete. • Cross-references medication information and patient data for accuracy and safety. • Applies knowledge of formulary and interchangeable products as needed. • Performs accurate calculations to support safe medication practices.
5.2	Prepares Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects appropriate product, dosage forms, and packaging. • Prepares and affixes appropriate labels. Ensures the quality, safety, and integrity of products (e.g. storage requirements, maintains sterility). • Measures products accurately using appropriate techniques, equipment, supplies and technology. • Prepares level A compounded products according to NAPRA guidelines and standards of practice. • Handles hazardous products safely by minimizing personal exposure and reducing environmental contamination (e.g., PPE, destruction, storage etc.).²
5.3	Releases Final Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the technical accuracy and completeness of products prior to release. • Confirms the pharmacist has reviewed the therapeutic appropriateness of the drug therapy or product prior to product release for both new and refill prescriptions/orders.¹ • Identifies and refers when the patient or healthcare professional requires consultation or education from the pharmacist.¹

Product Distribution - continued		
Element		Behavioural Indicators
5.4	Maintain Inventory Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports safe and efficient management of drug distribution in community pharmacy, long-term care or hospital setting, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ receiving, replenishing, and reconciling pharmacy or nursing inventory. ○ reconciling controlled substances as required by laws/regulations/policies ○ addressing inventory errors and discrepancies ○ identifying and removing expired/recalled or unsafe products^{1,2} ○ managing returned medication and ensuring appropriate disposal and destruction ○ maintaining effective cold chain processes
5.5	Supports Practice Management and Medication Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a clean, organized and tidy workspace ○ an efficient and organized workflow • Demonstrates time management skills necessary to effectively prioritize, and manage product distribution workflow. • Ensures safety, quality and integrity of drugs, equipment, and supplies, including storage and transport. • Supports a culture of patient safety by appropriately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ resolving missing doses (including referring to pharmacist if needed) ○ identifying medication incidents and near misses/good catches ○ identifying and reporting safety issues

References

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