

*DISCLAIMER: The Ontario government has not authorized the proposed scope of practice expansions as of the date of the public consultation. Therefore, this guidance has been developed as a draft for consideration in the event that authorization is provided at a future date.*

## **GUIDANCE – Requirements for Engaging in Specified Minor Ailments**

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### **Background**

To support the safe implementation of 14 additional minor ailments to pharmacist scope of practice in Ontario in 2026, and informed by a risk assessment and public consultation, the College has determined that pharmacists must complete a Declaration prior to engaging in specified minor ailments, including:

- Acute pharyngitis
- Otitis externa
- Herpes zoster

Pharmacists must submit a “Declaration of Meeting Expectations for Specified Minor Ailments”, found in the Training Page of their registrant profile. Registrants, depending on the scope of practice activities they choose to engage in, declare the following:

“I declare that I have met the requirements for assessing, managing and prescribing for **acute pharyngitis**, as described in the *Guidance – Requirements for Engaging in Specified Minor Ailments*, prior to engaging in this minor ailment.”

“I declare that I have met the requirements for assessing, managing and prescribing for **otitis externa**, as described in the *Guidance – Requirements for Engaging in Specified Minor Ailments*, prior to engaging in this minor ailment.”

“I declare that I have met the requirements for assessing, managing and prescribing for **herpes zoster**, as described in the *Guidance – Requirements for Engaging in Specified Minor Ailments*, prior to engaging in this minor ailment.”

To assist in their decision when making the above declarations, registrants consider the knowledge, skills, abilities, judgment, and competence they possess, acquired through

education and training (CCAP programs, CCCEP accredited courses), or experiential learning.

## **Requirements for Engaging in Specified Minor Ailments**

### **1. Acute Pharyngitis**

Any registrant who assesses, prescribes for, and manages acute pharyngitis, must have up-to-date knowledge of the condition, and have acquired learning that includes:

- The pathophysiology, clinical presentation and risk factors
- The differential diagnoses
- The red flags for referral
- How to perform physical assessments for acute pharyngitis
- Decision-making with respect to assessment and related testing, such as applying the modified CENTOR scoring system for identification of suspected Group A streptococcal infection
- Practical skills including swabbing techniques
- Infection prevention and control principles (that considers the community pharmacy environment)
- Prescribing decisions based on current clinical guidelines (viral vs. bacterial aetiologies; selection of antimicrobials; application of antimicrobial stewardship principles)
- Non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatment options
- Monitoring and follow-up parameters
- How to perform the point of care testing and laboratory testing to support assessment of acute pharyngitis, including appropriate follow-up on test results

### **2. Otitis Externa**

Any registrant who assesses, prescribes for, and manages otitis externa, must have up-to-date knowledge of the condition, and acquired learning that includes:

- The pathophysiology, clinical presentation and risk factors

- The differential diagnoses, including differentiation between otitis externa and otitis media
- The red flags for referral
- Infection prevention and control principles (that considers the community pharmacy environment)
- Non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatment options
- Prescribing decisions (selection of antimicrobials; application of antimicrobial stewardship principles) based on current clinical guidelines
- Monitoring and the follow-up parameters
- How to perform physical assessments for otitis externa, including having attended in-person training on otoscope use

### **3. Herpes Zoster**

Any registrant who assesses, prescribes for, and manages herpes zoster, must have up-to-date knowledge of the condition, and acquired learning that includes:

- The pathophysiology, clinical presentation and risk factors
- Variation in clinical presentation of shingles across different ethnic/racial backgrounds
- The differential diagnoses
- The red flags for referral
- Infection prevention and control principles (that considers the community pharmacy environment)
- Non-pharmacological and pharmacological treatment options, including consideration of special populations (e.g., patients with renal disease, patients living with cancer)
- Monitoring and follow-up parameters, especially related to high-risk shingles
- Counselling on vaccination to prevent recurrence

If a registrant determines they do not meet certain requirements listed above, they are required to seek out the necessary continuing professional development opportunities prior to engaging in the activity. Please refer to the [Continuing Education Links for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians](#) webpage for links to continuing education provider websites to access current CE resources and courses.

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