

UPDATE

New Pharmacy Inspection Process

Earlier this year, the College announced the addition of a new quality assurance measure that will help ensure Ontario's pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are providing safe, ethical and effective pharmacy care to patients. The new measure comes in the form of a change to how the College will conduct routine pharmacy inspections.

The new inspection model — known as the Practice Assessment — will expand the College's traditional approach of focusing on pharmacy operations and practice processes, to include an observation of an individual practitioner's performance in their practice site.

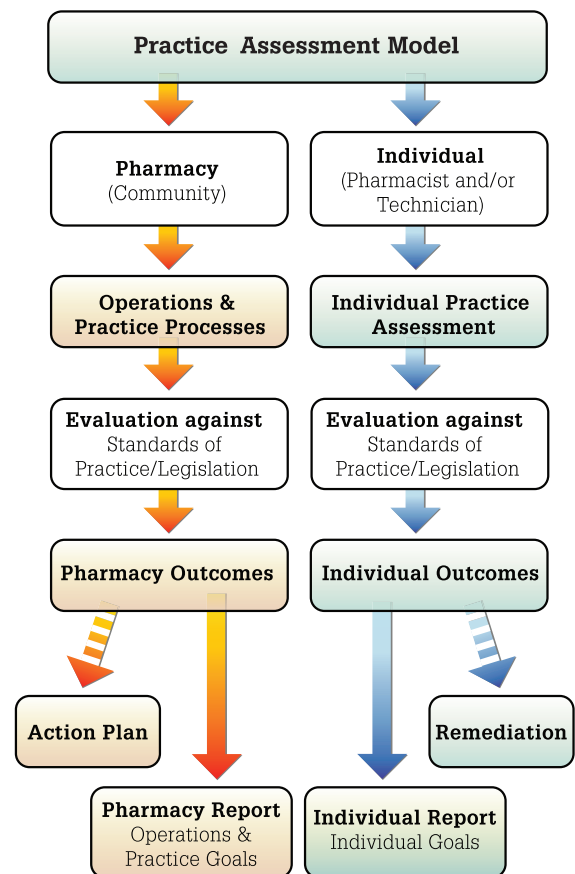
By assessing individual practitioners, the College will be able to better evaluate, coach and mentor pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to adhere to their professional responsibilities and Standards of Practice.

The Practice Assessment does not replace any part of the College's formal Quality Assurance Program such as the Peer Review, but does offer a chance for more practitioners to be involved in a quality assurance activity throughout their career. While the Peer Review uses standardized patient interviews with sample cases in a controlled environment, the new practice assessment reviews the practitioner's actual practice.

Practice advisors (formerly inspectors) will visit the pharmacy and evaluate the process for new prescriptions, refills, adaptations/prescribing and medication reviews. This will allow the practice advisor to assess the practitioner(s) in the following areas:

1. Patient assessment
2. Decision making
3. Documentation
4. Communication and education

Practice advisors will focus on identifying the processes that are in place that shape and support the practitioner's clinical decision-making, but will not assess the specific clinical decision.



The shift supports the role of pharmacists as medication experts and clinical decision-makers and is consistent with other primary healthcare practitioners such as doctors and nurses. A number of other provincial pharmacy regulators across the country have already implemented similar models or are in the process of moving to a more practice-focused assessment or inspection.

The College anticipates that the new Practice Assessments — that will begin with pilots in early 2015 — will increase adherence to practice standards, support practitioners as they practice to their full scope and ultimately assist in the delivery of greater health outcomes for patients. **PC**