

TERMS OF REFERENCE – Community Practice Environment Advisory Group

1.0 Community Pharmacy Practice Environment Initiative

The Ontario College of Pharmacists (the College) has launched a Community Practice Environment Initiative that will involve the active collaboration and participation of pharmacy stakeholders with the goal of ensuring principles of shared accountability for safe pharmacy care are upheld and that barriers to patient safety and professional autonomy are understood and mitigated. Supporting quality improvement in pharmacy practice to positively affect patient outcomes is a priority.

1.1 Purpose

Safe patient care is everyone's business, and ensuring safety and quality in pharmacy at all times is a shared accountability. The Community Practice Environment Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) has been established as part of this initiative to bring together the relevant parties to enable safe, quality practice and support patient safety by addressing the practice environment in community pharmacy for front-line staff.

The Advisory Group will develop principles of shared accountability for a community pharmacy operations environment to optimize professionalism that all parties can support, and that owners/operators of pharmacies (including Designated Managers and those who exercise authority over pharmacy operations) will use to develop specific solutions and strategies to implement in their pharmacies.

The work of the Advisory Group is the first phase of the broader Community Practice Environment Initiative to increase the accountability of all stakeholders to support a community practice environment that ensures safe, effective and high-quality patient care.

This document sets out the terms of reference for the **Community Practice Environment Advisory Group (the Advisory Group)**.

1.2 Scope

The Advisory Group will establish a set of principles that will form the foundation for pharmacy leaders to enable a positive community practice working environment to support professionalism and quality of patient care. Discussions and recommendations related to the working environment are within scope. Reimbursement, including models of reimbursement, proposed regulatory changes (such as expanded scope), advocacy for the profession, and discussions regarding implementation of other College initiatives are outside of the scope of this work.

2.0 Background

2.1 Public Interest Mandate

The College is mandated to protect and serve the public, and is committed to advancing safe, quality pharmacy practice throughout the province. To support its mandate, the College is engaged in a number of activities including expanding scope of practice in pharmacy, establishing quality indicators, and implementing the Assurance and Improvement in Medication Safety (AIMS) program. A positive community practice work environment further supports registrants to provide safe quality care.

Pharmacy professionals and pharmacy owners, operators and Designated Managers have a shared accountability for the delivery of safe quality care to pharmacy patients. The College has a duty and the regulatory authority, established through legislation and associated objects, to reinforce and uphold these shared accountability expectations and obligations outlined in the laws and regulations relevant to pharmacy as well as the Standards of Practice, Standards of Operation and Code of Ethics.

While the College is aware of the limitations of its authority over business practices in pharmacy, it is fully committed to acting appropriately and effectively within its mandate through existing regulatory mechanisms designed to protect the public. This includes ensuring that owners/operators of pharmacies, including Designated Managers and those who exercise authority over pharmacy operations, understand and are held accountable to their responsibilities and obligations under the Standards of Operation, just as pharmacy professionals are held accountable to the Standards of Practice.

2.2 Current State

Over the past few years, the College has conducted a number of engagement activities with registrants, including regional meetings and open consultations and informally through direct communication and dialogue related to various key initiatives and programs. One of the common themes in the feedback the College has consistently received through these engagement activities is a concern amongst community pharmacy professionals regarding their ability to provide safe, quality patient care within an increasingly challenging practice environment. With regards to [expanded scope of practice](#) considerations in community pharmacy, registrants are already voicing concerns around their ability to practice to this expanded scope in the current practice environment.

Specific concerns that have been raised by registrants include workload and other pressures to meet operational demands and the impact this has on professional autonomy and registrants' ability to meet the Standards of Practice. These concerns, which are now being expressed in nearly every consultation exercise regardless of the consultation topic, are often correlated with an increased risk of medication errors and lack of time available to adequately provide patient-centered pharmacy care.

Along with this feedback, data anonymously reported by pharmacy professionals through [our AIMS Program](#) is providing important insights into various causal factors that may be contributing to errors and near misses. In the first public bulletin and [data snapshot](#) published last September, staffing, workload and environmental factors were the single most commonly noted contributor, comprising 23.6% of the 4,426 incidents reported by on-boarded community pharmacies. The availability of this data and the ongoing feedback being expressed by registrants suggests that workload and staffing related challenges are top-of-mind for many community pharmacy professionals as a significant challenge that can have an impact on quality patient care.

The College shares the view that the practice environment must enable and support the provision of safe, quality patient-centred care at all times, and any barriers to achieving that goal must be addressed collaboratively.

3.0 Stakeholder Engagement Process

Through a comprehensive engagement plan that will feed into the Advisory Group, the College will consult with community pharmacy professionals, the public and other pharmacy stakeholders to inform

the development of principles of shared accountability that uphold the Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and Standards of Operations and put patient safety and quality care first.

Community pharmacy stakeholders include: Community Pharmacists, Community Pharmacy Technicians, pharmacy patients and caregivers, corporate/chain pharmacy owners and operators, franchise pharmacy owners and operators, and independent pharmacy owners and operators.

The goal of this engagement process will be to provide each of these stakeholder groups with an opportunity to contribute to and engage with the work of the Advisory Group. Opportunities for engagement will be informed by the Advisory Group, and may include the use of focus groups and/or surveys. The College values inclusive engagement, and will provide opportunities to participate through a variety of avenues.

4.0 Responsibilities:

All members of the Advisory Group are expected to fully prepare for meetings by reviewing meeting materials and participating in the discussions.

Specifically, Advisory Group members are expected to contribute in the following ways:

- Review background information, consider available evidence, and identify areas of improvement related to community pharmacy operations.
- Inform the stakeholder engagement process, with a focus on identifying methods for gathering meaningful feedback from pharmacy stakeholders.
- Review feedback received through the pharmacy stakeholder engagement process and incorporate it into any outputs developed related to principles of shared accountability in community pharmacy.
- Create principles of shared accountability for community pharmacy operations that align with the spirit and intent of this work to support professional autonomy, patient safety and improved patient outcomes, the Standards of Practice and quality improvement across the sector.
- Commit to supporting and adopting the principles developed by the Advisory Group through action.

4.1 Sunset

The work of the Advisory Group will sunset once the establishment of the principles have been completed.

5.0 Membership:

The composition of the Advisory Group is an important consideration to ensure that those around the table have the requisite knowledge and experience to inform the development of the principles, while also recognizing that there are specific groups that must be included in order for solutions and strategies to be identified and implemented.

Members representing corporate/chain, franchise and independent pharmacies will be appointed, ensuring that those representatives have the seniority required to effect change within their respective organizations.

Members representing community pharmacists, community pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy patients will be recruited through an open call using a defined set of criteria, ensuring that those selected represent a diverse type of community pharmacies and practice experiences.

The breakdown of membership is represented below.

Chair:

- CEO and Registrar, Ontario College of Pharmacists

Recruited Members:

- Community Pharmacists (up to 2 staff pharmacists and 1 Designated Manager) who are not pharmacy owners or shareholders
- Community Pharmacy Technicians (2) who are not pharmacy owners or shareholders
- Patients or caregivers of patients receiving ongoing care at a community pharmacy (2)

Appointed Members:

- Ontario Pharmacists Association representative
- Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada representative
- McKesson (Rexall) representative
- Shoppers Drug Mart representative
- Independent Pharmacy Group representative

A membership list is attached to the Terms of Reference on pg. 6 and specifies affiliation.

6.0 Attendance:

To maintain continuity and consistency in discussion and group composition, members will strive to attend all meetings.

Members are not permitted to send a delegate in their place in the event that they cannot attend a meeting. If unable to attend on the meeting date, members are encouraged to provide written feedback for consideration.

7.0 Recommendations:

The Advisory Group will provide expertise, insight, and advice on the content and structure of the principles document, and inform the pharmacy stakeholder engagement process. Advisory Group members will contribute to decisions within the limits of their knowledge and experience.

Recommendations will be made by consensus, but may be subject to a vote when consensus cannot be reached using a 2/3 majority vote. Dissenting views may be documented if requested.

8.0 Frequency of meetings:

The Advisory Group will meet 5-6 times between June and November 2020. Reasonable notice of meeting dates and times will be given in advance to each member. Meetings will be up to 2 hours in duration.

9.0 Secretariat support:

The College will be responsible for providing secretariat support for the Advisory Group by:

- Scheduling and hosting meetings

- Coordinating the preparation of information including but not limited to agendas and minutes
- Recording proceedings and reports, and maintaining information for the work of the Advisory Group
- Ensuring meetings take place in venues accessible to persons with disabilities
- Distributing meeting agendas and other materials prior to meetings
- Drafting and distributing a document outlining the principles of shared accountability and any related documents the Advisory Group develops
- Ensuring key updates and progress of the Advisory Group are available on the College website to support transparency of the discussions and decisions

10.0 Expenses:

Advisory Group members serve as volunteers and are not remunerated for their service or time spent at or preparing for meetings. The College will reimburse pre-approved travel expenses incurred by members in accordance with the [College's by-laws](#) if meetings are held in-person. No reimbursement will be provided for those attending meetings in a virtual setting.

11.0 Non-Disclosure, Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest:

Throughout the course of this work, Advisory Group members may be privy to confidential information. To support honest dialogue throughout this process, all members of the Advisory Group will be required to sign a statement of confidentiality and non-disclosure.

Conflicts of interest will be acknowledged at the first meeting. It is expected that these interests will not impede the ability of the Advisory Group to develop principles of shared accountability in the public interest.

12.0 Board Endorsement

The principles of shared accountability will be shared with the College's Board for review and endorsement.

13.0 Review:

Terms of Reference, including role, responsibilities, and membership will be reviewed as needed.

14.0 Future Activity

Once the principles of shared accountability are established, the College is planning to evaluate the experience of pharmacy professionals within their practice environments. Using existing mechanisms of information gathering from registrants, the College will use this data to understand how the principles are addressing the concerns that have been raised by registrants and identify opportunities to strengthen the principles and/or the community practice environment.

Community Practice Environment Advisory Group Member List

Ashesh Desai	EVP Pharmacy (Shoppers Drug Mart)
Domenic Pilla	CEO McKesson Canada (Rexall Pharmacies)
Jean Beckett	Pharmacy Patient (Northern Ontario)
Justin Bates	CEO Ontario Pharmacists Association
Leila Ryan	Pharmacy Patient (Southern Ontario)
Lori Miller	Pharmacy Technician (Independent Pharmacy)
Michael Short	Designated Manager (Sobeys Pharmacy)
Patricia (Lynn) Halliday	Pharmacist (Independent & Loblaw Pharmacies)
Sandra Hanna	CEO Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada
Sejal Kothari	Pharmacist (Independent & Rexall/PharmaPlus Pharmacies)
Sherif Guorgui	Co-CEO OnPharm-United (Independent Pharmacies)
Zenobia Roussel	Pharmacy Technician (Shoppers Drug Mart & Loblaw Pharmacies)

Ontario College of Pharmacists - Secretariat Support

Nancy Lum-Wilson	CEO and Registrar (<i>Chair</i>)
Vivian Ng	Manager Strategic Policy, Planning and Analytics
Todd Leach	Manager Communications
Delia Sinclair Frigault	Policy Advisor