

# NAVIGATING CHANGE AND PUTTING PATIENTS FIRST



Ontario College  
of Pharmacists

Putting patients first since 1871

## 2021 Annual Report



# Message from the Board Chair



If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it's that resiliency is the key to success. Being able to quickly respond and adapt to unexpected challenges is more important than ever, particularly when public safety is your primary focus.

I am proud of the way the pharmacy profession has steadfastly maintained access to safe, quality pharmacy care despite extraordinary public health protocols—while at the same time stepping up to participate in the province's COVID-19 testing and vaccination programs. This has further strengthened the public's trust of the profession and has enhanced their access to critical services when they needed them most. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank all registrants for their commitment to positive patient outcomes, for their resilience and skill, and for their continued leadership as part of a collaborative healthcare system.

I would also like to acknowledge the College for the way it adapted to support the profession over the past two years by developing policies, guidance and resources to help pharmacy professionals safely practice in this new environment. And despite the pandemic, the College has continued to focus on its core regulatory work, including making progress on important key initiatives that are designed to enhance patient safety and measure the overall quality of pharmacy care in Ontario.

As a Board, we have continued to focus on governance reform and on performance management oversight, using tools such as the Ministry of Health's College Performance Measurement Framework and the College Scorecard to support our fiduciary duty. We remain committed to involving the profession and the public in the work of the Board and our committees, and we appreciate the important contributions of those who have shared their voices, their time, their expertise, and their passion for serving and protecting the public.

I thank my fellow Board members and committee members for their dedication, and I know each of us is grateful for the honour of serving in our various roles. We look forward to continued engagement with the profession, the College, partners, stakeholders and pharmacy patients as we work to ensure the interests of the public are protected and maintained.

**Sincerely,**  
Billy Cheung  
Chair, Board of Directors

# Message from the Acting Registrar and Director, Quality



**F**or the past two years, the entire world has been adapting to the changing realities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Here in Ontario, COVID-19 has reshaped how pharmacy care is delivered, and it has redefined the role of the province's 22,000-plus pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who have continued to provide timely access to safe, quality health services. Throughout the pandemic, pharmacy professionals have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to keeping our communities safe, adapting to evolving public health guidelines and supporting the province's COVID-19 testing and vaccination programs. The College appreciates their efforts in response to this unprecedented public health crisis.

The demands on the profession have never been greater. As the regulator for pharmacies and pharmacy professionals in Ontario, we recognize the added burden of the pandemic on their important work and remain committed to working collaboratively with the profession and stakeholders to support a comprehensive response to COVID-19 — from expanding the scope of pharmacy technicians to administer the influenza and COVID-19 vaccines, to the development of policies and guidance as pharmacy adapted to a new way of delivering care.

The College, like other regulators, has identified health provider stress, burnout and health system capacity as critical concerns. That's why we believe our work to develop provider experience indicators in collaboration with members of the profession, health system stakeholders and patients is an important milestone. We have just finished soliciting insights from registrants during our most recent annual renewal, and we anticipate using that feedback in the future to identify important strategies for us as a regulator and for the

profession as a whole — including those who own and operate pharmacies — to ensure that the experience of regulated pharmacy professionals is positive and enables quality and safe care for patients.

We have also been able to advance a number of our strategic and operational priorities this past year despite the realities of the pandemic, never losing sight of the core College work that underscores our legislative mandate to serve and protect the public interest. This includes making progress on several key initiatives related to patient safety, while at the same time remaining mindful of the pressures pharmacy professionals are facing in their day-to-day practice and remaining flexible in how we carry out our duties in the public interest.

This has all been made possible thanks to the invaluable contributions that registrants, stakeholders, partners and patients make to our regulatory duty. Whether that be through informal input and engagement, or more formal partnerships and collaboration in advisory and working groups and committees, the involvement of our stakeholders is an integral part of how we advance our mandate and ensure that the diversity of voices is reflected in our work each day.

As the Acting Registrar, I am proud of the way the profession and the College have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, and I know that, together, we will continue to put patients first as we navigate the evolving realities of pharmacy care in Ontario.

**Sincerely,**

Susan James

Acting Registrar and Director, Quality

# Regulating pharmacy practice to serve the interests, health and well-being of the public



The Ontario College of Pharmacists, incorporated in 1871, is the registering and regulating body for the profession of pharmacy in Ontario. The College's mandate, established through legislation and expressed through associated objects, is to serve and protect the public interest and hold Ontario's registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians accountable to the established legislation, standards of practice, Code of Ethics and policies and guidelines relevant to pharmacy practice.

The College also regulates and accredits community and hospital pharmacies, holding them accountable to operational standards and relevant policies and legislation; pharmacies must be accredited by the College in order to operate in Ontario.

- |   |  |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|
|   | Setting the requirements to become a regulated pharmacy professional. Only qualified professionals are registered to practise. |   | Providing a public register to help the public make informed choices about their pharmacy and pharmacy professional. |   | Establishing and holding registrants accountable to the Code of Ethics.   |
|  | Setting and enforcing practice standards and policies so that the public receives safe and competent healthcare.               |  | Addressing concerns or complaints about the conduct, quality or safety of a pharmacy or pharmacy professional        |  | Routinely assessing registrants and pharmacies to promote continuous quality improvement.                                   |
|  | Having programs to help professionals keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date.  |  | Setting and enforcing standards of operation of community and hospital pharmacies and other pharmacy types.          |  | Engaging and educating the public about the role of the College and what they should expect from their pharmacy experience. |

# WHO ARE ONTARIO'S PHARMACY PROFESSIONALS AND WHERE DO THEY PRACTICE?



**17,462**  
PHARMACISTS

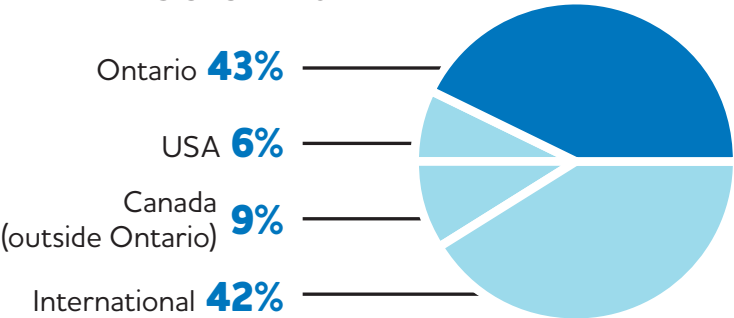
**45**  
average age of  
pharmacists

**5,471**  
PHARMACY  
TECHNICIANS

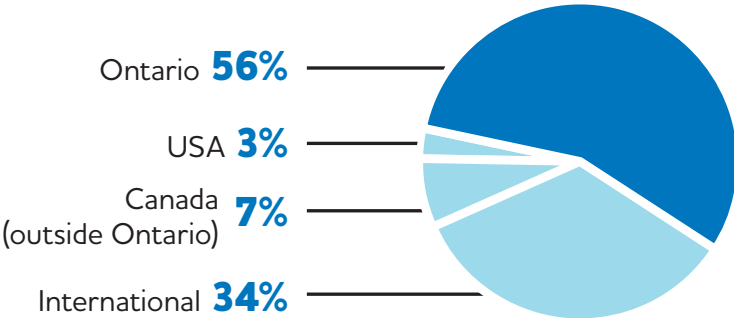
**41**  
average age of  
pharmacy  
technicians

Data shown is from 2021

**PLACE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL  
PHARMACISTS IN 2021**



**PLACE OF EDUCATION FOR NEW  
PHARMACIST REGISTRANTS IN 2021**



## NEW REGISTRANTS IN 2021



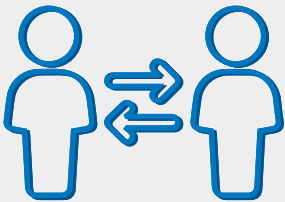
**1,029**  
new pharmacist  
registrants\*

**403**  
new pharmacy  
technician  
registrants\*



**1,535**  
pharmacy students  
and interns currently  
training in Ontario

**185**  
new out-of-province  
pharmacy professionals  
registered in Ontario  
through the Agreement  
on Internal Trade



\*Includes registrants who re-registered with the College.



**4,782**  
accredited community pharmacies

**85**  
community pharmacies  
providing sterile compounding

**1,852**  
community pharmacies providing  
methadone maintenance  
treatment

Data shown is  
from 2021



**237**  
accredited  
hospital pharmacies  
in 2021

**115**  
hospital pharmacies  
providing sterile  
compounding in 2021



**6**

drug preparation premises in 2021



### COMMUNITY PHARMACY OWNERSHIP IN 2021

**302**  
small chains  
(3 to 19 pharmacies  
owned by a single  
corporation)

**67**  
banner

**112**  
franchise

**840**  
large chains  
(20+ pharmacies  
owned by a single  
corporation)

**13**  
banner

**0**  
franchise

**3,640**  
independently owned  
(1-2 pharmacies  
owned by a single  
corporation)

**1,680**  
banner

**561**  
franchise



### PLACE OF PRACTICE

### PHARMACIST

### PHARMACY TECHNICIAN

Community pharmacy	<b>12,026</b>	<b>1,848</b>
Hospital and other healthcare facilities	<b>2,900</b>	<b>3,197</b>
No workplace recorded	<b>1,441</b>	<b>246</b>
Association/academia/government	<b>326</b>	<b>82</b>
Industry/other	<b>598</b>	<b>72</b>
Pharmacy corporate office/ professional practice/clinic	<b>130</b>	<b>17</b>

Data shown is from 2021

**Banner:** Pharmacies that are affiliated with a central office where they use a recognized name and may participate in centralized buying, marketing, professional programs, etc.

**Franchise:** Pharmacy is owned by franchisee who enters a business relationship with a company (franchisor) for the legal usage of the franchisor's name and products





# Taking a responsive approach to regulation throughout the pandemic

Two years ago, the emergence of COVID-19 disrupted all of our lives – and the profession of pharmacy – in ways that were previously unimaginable. Maintaining safe access to pharmacy care required a new approach to interacting with patients, and intensified the need for clear guidance and support to keep staff and patients safe in the delivery of pharmacy services, including those related to the public health response to the pandemic.

In 2021, the second year of the pandemic, the College, in collaboration with our system partners, continued its efforts on providing registrants with the timely information and resources they required to provide safe and effective care, and to support the needs of the profession as it rose to the challenge of tackling COVID-19 with confidence.

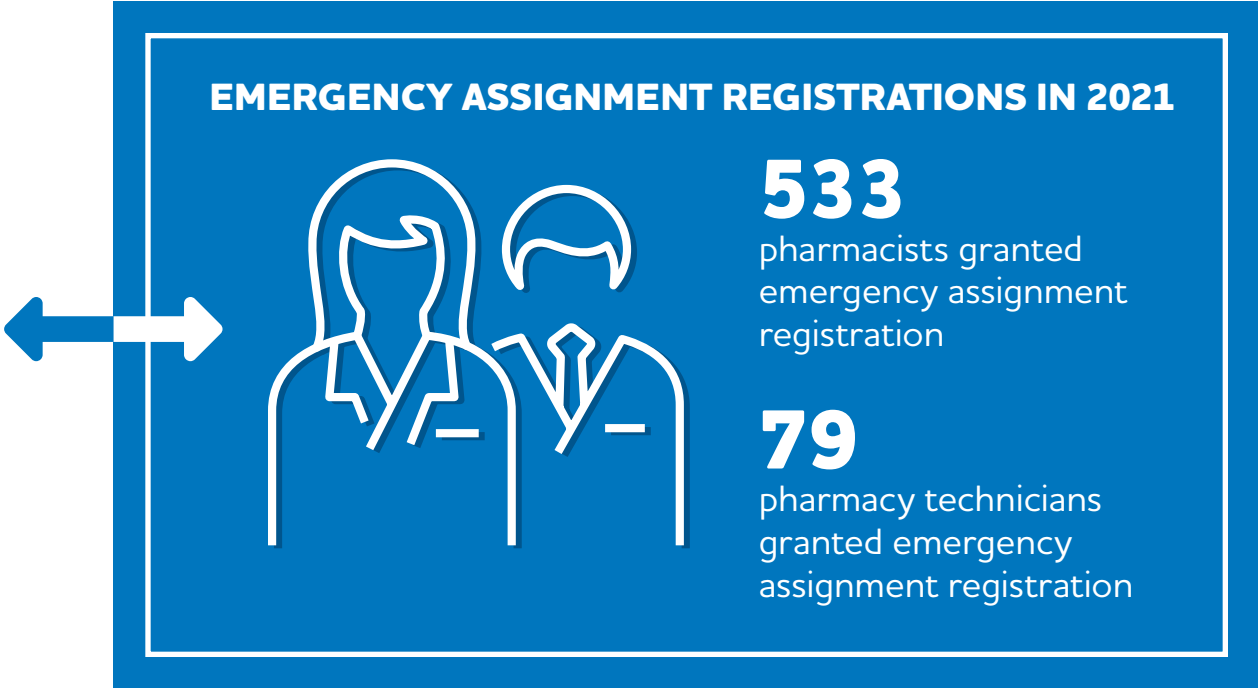
ENABLING AND PROTECTING ACCESS TO SAFE CARE  
AND EVOLVING PHARMACY SERVICES

In March 2021, the College initiated [emergency assignment registration](#) to address the workforce need for additional pharmacists and pharmacy technicians due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This followed government approval of regulatory amendments to the *Pharmacy Act* that were submitted by the College to enable the creation of an emergency assignment registration certificate class of pharmacy professionals. By year-end, a total of 612 pharmacists and pharmacy technicians were granted emergency assignment registrations.

As the provincial government’s COVID-19 testing and vaccination programs evolved throughout 2021, the College published updated guidance to support pharmacy professionals participating in the rollout. [Administration of COVID-19 Vaccine by Pharmacy Professionals](#) and [COVID-19 Testing in Community Pharmacies](#) are examples of guidance developed or updated to supplement resources from the Ministry of Health.

With concerns about a COVID-19 wave coinciding with flu season, the College submitted draft regulations to enable pharmacy technicians to administer the influenza vaccine and to extend temporary authorization for pharmacists to renew and adapt prescriptions for Controlled Drugs and Substances. These [regulations](#), approved by the government in November 2021, recognized the demands of the flu season on pharmacies already offering COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, and provided much-needed support that gave patients greater access to care.

The College also collaborated with pharmacy professionals to identify a set of indicators to help measure the provider experience as part of the [Quality Indicators for Pharmacy initiative](#). As the demands of COVID-19 have intensified stress on pharmacy professionals, it is more important than ever that we have a mechanism to understand the experience of delivering pharmacy care in Ontario, and that we take an evidence-informed approach to improving that experience—and ultimately, patient outcomes. You can read more about the provider experience indicators on [page 11](#).





## COLLABORATIVELY RESPONDING TO EMERGING PRIORITIES

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the College has continued to respond to the needs of pharmacy professionals, pharmacies, patients and stakeholders by:

- Regularly reviewing and revising practice guidance and policies, in close collaboration with our health system partners and pharmacy stakeholders, to ensure they remain current and relevant.
- Including stakeholder voices in decision making, through open consultations, surveys and involvement with College working groups.
- Targeting messaging to ensure that the right information is being shared with the right audience at the right time.
- Prioritizing the communication of important legislative and regulatory updates, policy changes, practice guidance and resources to keep registrants well-informed.



## SERVING THE PUBLIC INTEREST BY ADAPTING TO THE REALITIES OF THE PANDEMIC

As an essential service, pharmacies maintained access to safe, quality pharmacy care throughout the pandemic. The College, too, maintained its ability to meet its statutory and legislated obligations as a regulator by adapting and remaining flexible with how we conduct our activities.

- We continued to leverage technology and our well-established teleworking infrastructure to carry out discipline hearings, routine practice assessments, a majority of operational assessments and all Board of Director and committee meetings in virtual settings.
- The Jurisprudence Exam transitioned to a computer-based format, giving candidates the opportunity to take the exam online by remote proctor or in select testing centres across Canada that operated in compliance with local public health orders.

### JURISPRUDENCE EXAM

Of the **1,272** candidates who took the JP Exam in 2021:

**815** applied to be pharmacists

**457** applied to be pharmacy technicians

**64%** of candidates took advantage of the computer-based exam

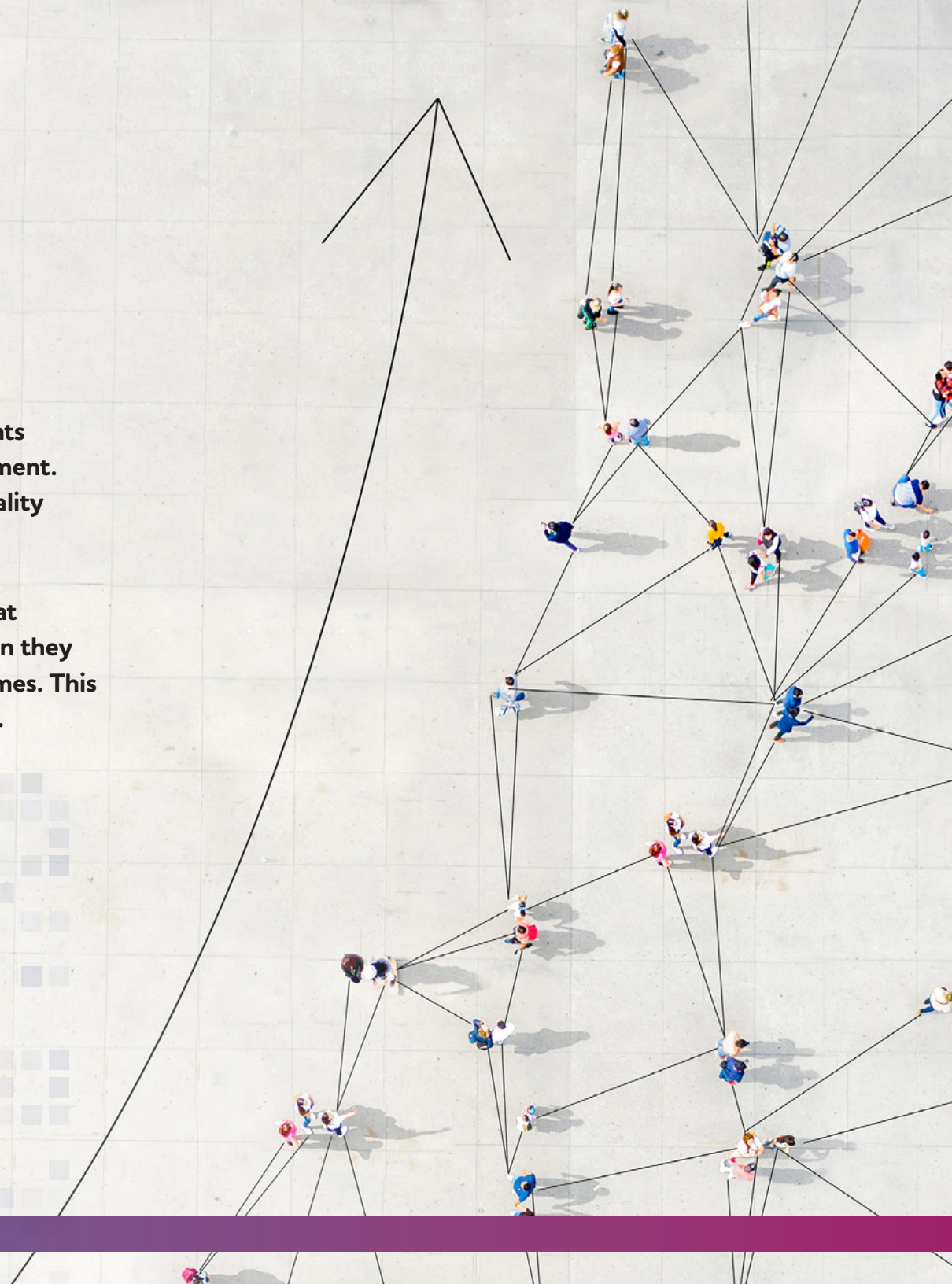
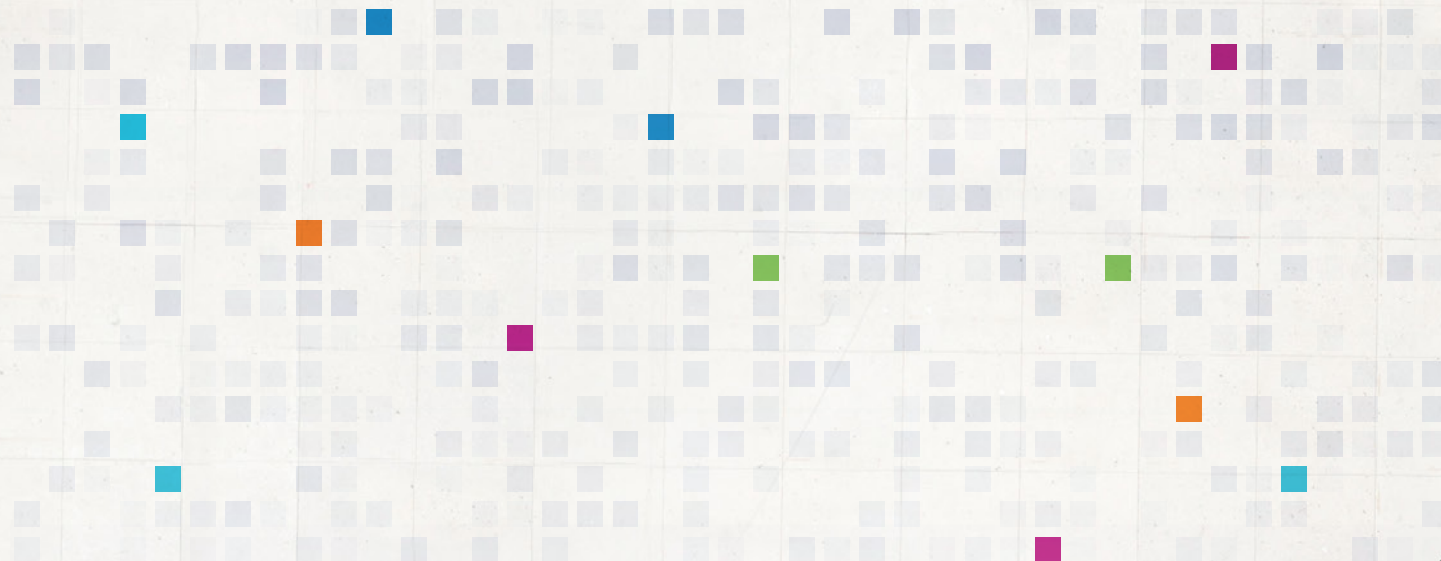
**95%** of candidates passed the exam



# Harnessing data to enhance patient safety

It's been said that you can't improve what you don't measure, and making quality improvements that can enhance pharmacy patient outcomes is an ideal example of the accuracy of this statement. With robust data, pharmacy professionals can better identify opportunities for continuous quality improvement that put patients first and build trust in the profession of pharmacy.

That's why collecting, analyzing and sharing data is a top priority for the College. We know that successful quality improvement is data-driven, and we want registrants to have the information they need to make informed choices that can result in better, evidence-based patient health outcomes. This is an important example of how the College fulfills its mandate to serve and protect the public.





QUALITY INDICATORS FOR PHARMACY

To better understand the impact of community pharmacy care on patient outcomes, the College collaborated with Health Quality Ontario to establish the first set of quality indicators for community pharmacy in Canada. These indicators are helping to demonstrate the quality of pharmacy care in the province and its connection to patient outcomes, while also giving pharmacy professionals and the College data to make evidence-informed decisions about continuous quality improvement strategies. In 2021, the College made important progress to ensure this work adds value to the profession and, ultimately, to enhanced patient outcomes.

Provider Experience

There is a well-established link between healthcare provider experience and the quality of care provided—studies of burnout among health providers, for instance, have demonstrated the negative impact it can have on patient care and outcomes.

To better understand the connection, the College established a working group of pharmacy professionals in early 2021 to help identify a set of indicators to measure the experience of delivering pharmacy care in Ontario. This group finalized a set of four indicators that were confirmed by year-end, following an online consultation to gather feedback.

In 2022, the provider experience indicators were included in a survey link in each registrant’s annual renewal, and will be publicly reported at an aggregate level to help identify demographic and regional variations in responses. The anonymous data collected is an important first step towards using an evidence-based, data-informed approach to understanding and improving the overall provider experience and, ultimately, outcomes for patients.

Patient/Caregiver-Reported Experience

The Patient/Caregiver-Reported Experience Measures were developed for community pharmacy in 2019 using a rigorous process led by an expert panel that incorporated feedback from more than 100 patients, 20 corporate executive leaders and 100 frontline pharmacy professionals. In 2021, the College worked with patients and the public, pharmacy professionals, those who own and operate pharmacies, data collection experts and other stakeholders to develop a strategy for collecting data from patients and caregivers, work that will continue in 2022.

Appropriateness of Dispensed Medications, Medication-related Hospital Visits, and Transitions of Care

An [interactive tool](#) on the College’s website has been updated with data on the appropriateness of dispensed medications, medication-related hospital visits, and transitions of care – indicators that provide the public with a clearer picture of the overall quality of pharmacy care in Ontario and support quality improvement efforts by pharmacy teams and the College. Pharmacy professionals are encouraged to use the tool alongside information and data from their own practice to better understand and enhance the quality of care they provide.

Two of the indicators — percentage of patients who were newly dispensed an opioid prescription greater than 50 mg morphine equivalents per day, and hospital visits for opioid poisonings among patients that are actively treated with an opioid prescription — are designed to drive quality improvement as it pertains to opioid dispensing, and are aligned with the College’s [Opioid Strategy](#).

Each of the three indicators has been updated for 2022.



**PATIENT/CAREGIVER-REPORTED EXPERIENCE INDICATORS**



My pharmacist helped me understand why I am taking each of my medications.



My pharmacist made sure I understood how to take my medication properly.



My pharmacist made sure I understood what results I might expect from my medication, including any side effects or drug/food interactions that may occur.



My pharmacist helped me understand how to know if my medication is working.



ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT IN MEDICATION SAFETY (AIMS)

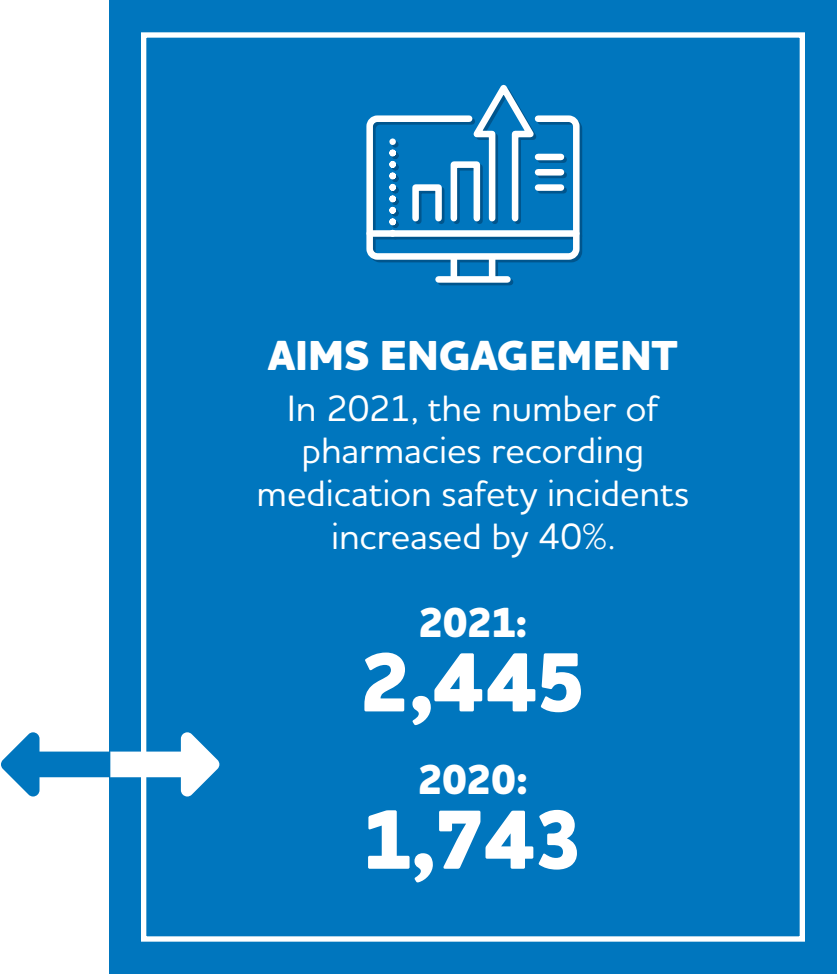
The Assurance and Improvement in Medication Safety (AIMS) Program supports continuous quality improvement and puts in place a mandatory consistent standard for medication safety for all pharmacies in the province. Its goal: to reduce the risk of patient harm caused by medication incidents in, or involving, Ontario pharmacies.

The intent of the program is to enable practitioners to learn from medication incidents, and better understand why they happen and how they can be prevented. Utilizing both a preventative approach through proactive reviews of work processes to identify areas of risk and retrospective reviews of specific medication incidents, pharmacy professionals will be able to identify learnings that will help prevent incidents and enhance patient safety.

Key accomplishments in 2021:

- An AIMS Safety Insights Group (SIG) comprising pharmacy and data analysis experts was formed to work with the College and the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network (ODPRN) to provide guidance and actionable recommendations for pharmacy professionals, the pharmacy sector and other health system stakeholders on how to improve medication safety. The AIMS SIG is responsible for identifying recommendations that will be shared through regular reports based on data analysis which will include key findings and proposed actions for pharmacy professionals and other stakeholders. The first report is expected in 2022.

- Each community pharmacy was required to complete a Pharmacy Safety Self-Assessment (PSSA), an informative quality improvement tool that helps identify potential risks within a pharmacy’s work processes and provides a baseline understanding of a pharmacy’s medication safety rating. This information is then used to plan improvement activities in the pharmacy, which will be monitored over time to measure their impact and effectiveness at enhancing patient safety.
- The College focused on **educating registrants** about the benefits of the AIMS Program, building a culture of medication safety in each pharmacy, and utilizing available tools for continuous quality improvement. This education continues in 2022 to support pharmacies in the effective use of the AIMS Program.
- The College updated the **interactive tool** on its website to give pharmacy teams and stakeholders access to aggregate, anonymous medication safety data collected through the AIMS Pharmapod platform.
- The number of pharmacies recording medication safety incidents nearly doubled in 2021 versus the previous year—a strong indication that pharmacies are using the AIMS Program as intended, and a reflection of pharmacy professionals’ commitment to patient safety and quality improvement.





# Performance & accountability

As the province's pharmacy regulator, the College is accountable to all Ontarians who access care from one of Ontario's more than 22,000 pharmacy professionals. Through its performance and accountability commitments, the College ensures its operations and activities contribute to, and support, the delivery of safe, quality care.

Building on work from previous years, in 2021 the College continued to focus on three key commitments which reinforce the College's core values of accountability, integrity and transparency.

CONTRIBUTING TO SYSTEM-WIDE REGULATORY ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPROVEMENT

In 2021, all 26 health regulatory colleges in Ontario submitted their first reports using the College Performance Measurement Framework (CPMF) developed by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with regulators throughout the province, including the College. The CPMF is an important tool designed to publicly report on the performance of health regulatory colleges against a consistent set of standardized measures. With a view to promoting ongoing system-wide improvements and commendable practices, the CPMF is a valuable mechanism ultimately aimed at building and maintaining public confidence and trust in health regulation.

The CPMF provides an overview of seven measurement domains, including governance and system partnerships, policy, registration, quality assurance and complaints processes. A long believer in measuring and reporting on its own regulatory performance, the College has modified its own Board Scorecard to align indicator domains with those of the CPMF (see page 15).



The Ministry noted the College’s governance reform work and specifically recognized the College for having commendable practices in how it approached system partnerships related to its work on the development and deployment of quality indicators for pharmacy.



In its CPMF [summary report](#) published in October 2021, the Ministry noted the College’s governance reform work and specifically recognized the College for having commendable practices in how it approached system partnerships related to its work on the development and deployment of quality indicators for pharmacy – the first of their kind in the country. The College is looking forward to building off of its inaugural CPMF submission and sharing its successes with others. The College will continue to collaborate with the Ministry as this important tool matures and evolves over time, and will consider the commendable practices of our regulatory partners in how we conduct our work as Canada’s largest pharmacy regulator.

The most recent submission of the College’s CPMF report to the Ministry was published in March 2022 and is available on the College’s website.



## ENABLING EFFECTIVE OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE THROUGH OUR COLLEGE SCORECARD

To further demonstrate and reinforce continued alignment with the Ministry's expectations and the College's commitment to transparency, public accountability and performance improvement, the College Scorecard was modified in 2021 to mirror the seven CPMF domains. Introduced originally in 2018 to monitor and transparently report on trends, risks and activities in line with the College's strategic priorities in order to support effective Board oversight of the College's regulatory activities, the Scorecard now reports on the College's progress against the CPMF domains and priorities defined in the strategic

framework. Produced on a quarterly basis and released at each scheduled Board meeting, the Scorecard has become a valuable accountability and quality improvement tool for the College.

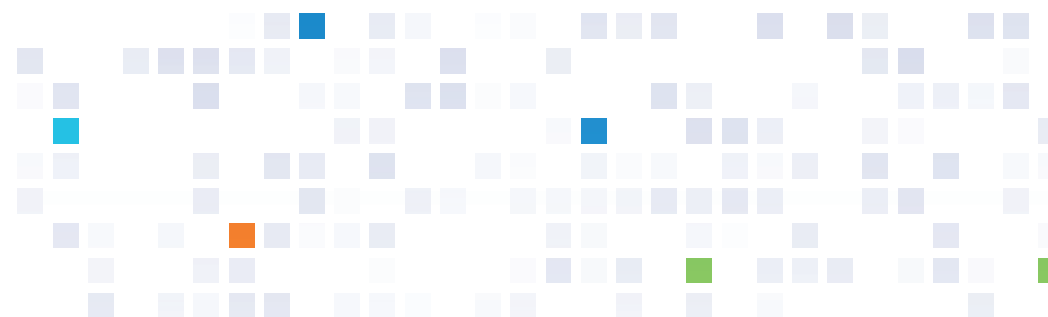
The College is exploring ways to make the performance scorecard more accessible, giving the public and registrants quick and easy access.



## ENHANCING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE THROUGH GOVERNANCE RENEWAL

Building off its successful implementation of initial governance reforms in 2020, the College continued to focus on the renewal of governance practices in 2021, through:

- Seeking to balance the Board against competency gaps identified in the skills inventory. This included appointing a pharmacist Board member with experience serving patients in northern/remote areas of the province
- Maintaining a reduced Board size, allowing for a balance of government-appointed public members and elected professional members
- Constituting statutory and standing committees using a competency based model
- Replacing the old Governance Manual with new standalone Board policies reflecting regulatory governance best practice as well as introducing three By-Law amendments to support improvement in governance practice and to strengthen trust in the College's mandate to serve and protect the public





# Maintaining standards of the profession

One of the College's key roles is to ensure that pharmacies are operating safely and that pharmacy professionals continue to maintain their skills throughout their careers. We continually evaluate opportunities for quality improvement in our assessment and quality assurance programs in order to enhance our processes and support the public's trust in their pharmacy care.

## Pharmacy Operational Assessments

Only pharmacies that have been assessed and have met specified criteria are authorized to operate in the province. The Accreditation Committee deals with the standards of operation of accredited community and hospital pharmacies in Ontario. These matters include operational requirements, ownership, supervision and the distribution of drugs in the pharmacy. The Committee also reviews issues relating to pharmacy assessments where the pharmacy has failed to comply with the requirements.

## Quality Assurance Program

The Quality Assurance Program helps to ensure the continuing competency of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. It includes requirements for a learning portfolio, self-assessment and practice assessment. The Quality Assurance Committee develops and maintains the Quality Assurance Program, which includes a two-part register, continuing education, minimum practice requirements and a practice review process. It supports continued competence and encourages continuing professional development of practitioners.

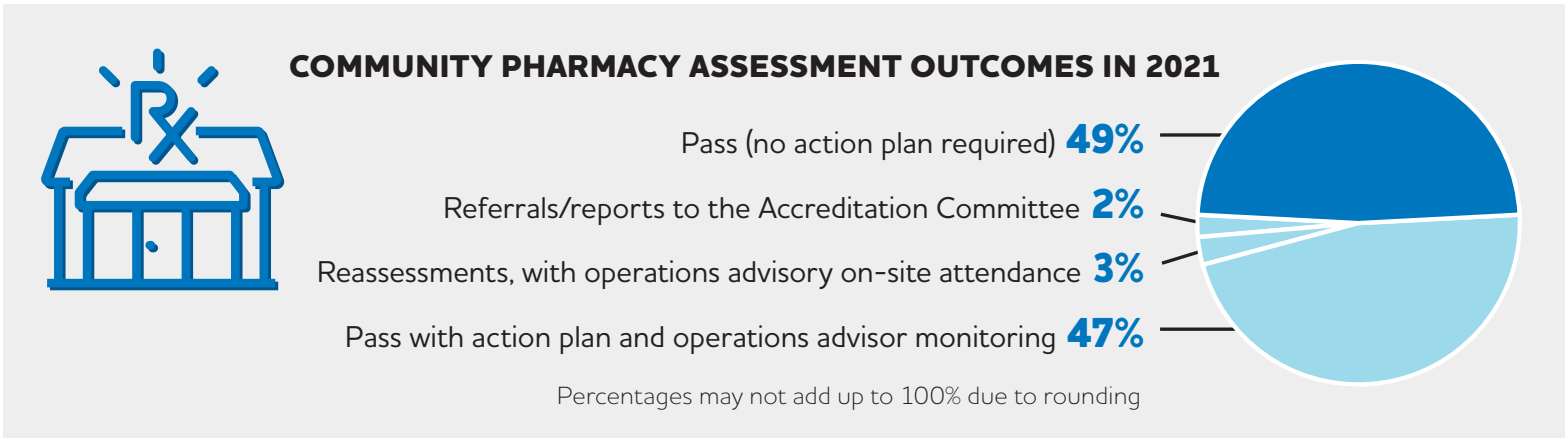
## Practice Assessments


The College assesses regulated pharmacy professionals in community and hospital practice settings to validate their practice and identify opportunities for improvement. These assessments are guided by specific assessment criteria focusing on patient assessment, decision-making, documentation and communication and education. As quality assurance regulations have not yet been approved, assessments for pharmacy technicians are currently voluntary.

# MAINTAINING STANDARDS OF THE PROFESSION

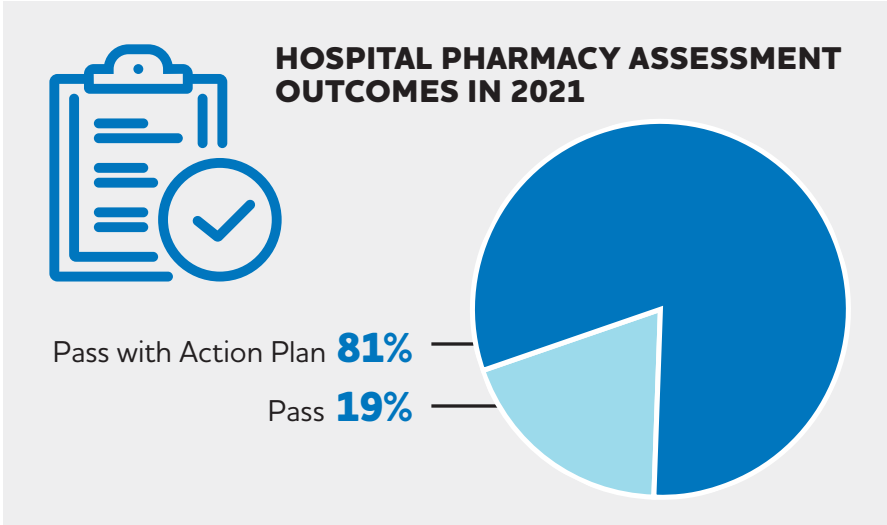
## PHARMACY ASSESSMENTS

TYPE OF COMMUNITY PHARMACY ASSESSMENTS	2021
Routine	566
Change in ownership	248
New openings (first visit)	178
New openings (call back after six months)	340
Relocations	31
Re-assessments ordered by operations advisor	31
Re-assessments ordered by the Accreditation Committee	15
TOTAL	1,409





TYPE OF HOSPITAL PHARMACY ASSESSMENT	2021
Routine	142
New Opening	5
Relocation	0



For a complete breakdown of statistics depicted in these infographics, please refer to the 2021 Supplementary Data Report or the College Performance Measurement Framework



QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

SELF-ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED AS PART OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM IN 2021



3,570  
Pharmacists

911  
Pharmacy Technicians

QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES IN 2021



0 Registrants referred to the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee by the QA Committee



1 Registrants with Terms, Conditions or Limitations placed on their certificate of registration regarding quality assurance activities



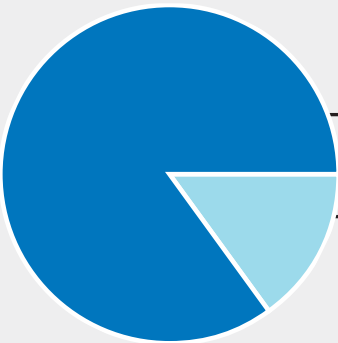
10 Registrants referred to the QA Committee and directed to undertake remediation

PRACTICE ASSESSMENTS



COMMUNITY PHARMACIST PRACTICE ASSESSMENTS IN 2021

698  
Routine assessments

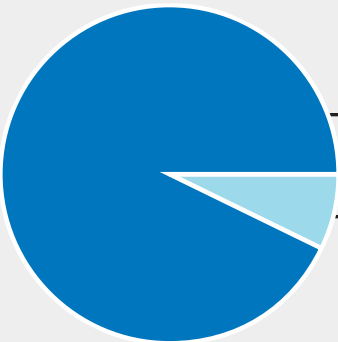


85% Passed with self-directed learning

15% Required additional coaching and reassessment

COMMUNITY PHARMACY TECHNICIAN PRACTICE ASSESSMENTS IN 2021

191  
Routine assessments



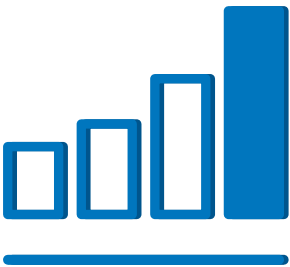
93% Passed with self-directed learning

7% Required additional coaching and reassessment



HOSPITAL PHARMACY TECHNICIAN PRACTICE ASSESSMENTS

118  
Routine assessments



100%  
Passed with self-directed learning

For a complete breakdown of statistics depicted in these infographics, please refer to the 2021 Supplementary Data Report or the College Performance Measurement Framework

# Registering qualified professionals

The College ensures that only those applicants who have successfully met the registration requirements, and demonstrated the required knowledge, skills and abilities, are granted the right to practice in Ontario.

## Registration Committee

The Registration Committee provides guidance to the Board on matters concerning registration, examinations and in-service training required prior to registration. If an applicant does not meet specific requirements to register with the College, their application is referred to a panel of the Registration Committee for individual consideration.

## Jurisprudence Exam

The Jurisprudence Exam is an entry-to-practice requirement for registration as a pharmacist or pharmacy technician in Ontario. It assesses a candidate’s knowledge of federal and provincial legislation affecting pharmacy practice in Ontario as part of the “Ethical, Legal and Professional Responsibilities” competency from the Professional Competencies for Canadian Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians at Entry-to-Practice. The exam is based on an examination blueprint that has been approved by the Registration Committee.

## Practice-Based Registration Requirements

Practice Assessment of Competence at Entry (PACE) is a practice-based registration requirement for all Ontario pharmacist applicants who graduated from a pharmacy degree program outside of the province and who are applying for licensure as a pharmacist in Canada for the first time. Structured Practical Training (SPT) is a practice-based registration requirement for all pharmacy technician candidates.

## REGISTRATION COMMITTEE REQUESTS AND OUTCOMES IN 2021



## PRACTICE ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE AT ENTRY (PACE) IN 2021

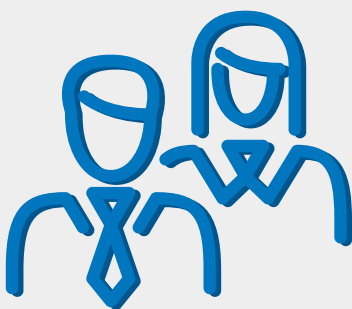


Number of candidates who attempted PACE

88%

Number successful on their first attempt

## STRUCTURED PRACTICAL TRAINING (SPT) IN 2021



Number of candidates who commenced SPT

For a complete breakdown of statistics depicted in these infographics, please refer to the 2021 Supplementary Data Report or the College Performance Measurement Framework

# Addressing concerns

**Part of the College’s legislative mandate to serve and protect the public is to investigate and resolve complaints or concerns about pharmacy professionals. Anyone—a member of the public, a patient or a healthcare professional—can report information or file a complaint. The College also receives information through mandatory reports and self-reports.**

## **Complaints and Reports**

The Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC) oversees all investigations into a pharmacy professional’s conduct, competence, or capacity, including complaints, Registrar’s investigations arising from a report to the College, and health inquiries. Meeting as panels, the ICRC reviews the investigation materials and submissions from all parties and decides the outcome of the investigation. The ICRC has a number of options when deciding on the outcome of a complaint or report, from taking no action and recommending remedial activities, to referring more serious concerns to the College’s Discipline Committee. Learnings from specific matters brought before the ICRC are routinely shared broadly with registrants as helpful practice insights.

## **Discipline**

If there are concerns that a registrant has demonstrated a deliberate disregard for a patient’s welfare, engaged in disgraceful or unprofessional behaviour, or demonstrated substandard care, then specified allegations of professional and/or proprietary misconduct can be referred to the College’s Discipline Committee. Panels of the Discipline Committee hear allegations of professional or proprietary misconduct. Upon making a finding of professional or proprietary misconduct the panel has the authority to revoke, suspend, reprimand, fine or impose terms or restrictions on a practitioner’s practice.

## **Health Inquiries**

When the College becomes aware that a pharmacy professional may be incapacitated, health inquiries are initiated. A pharmacy professional is incapacitated when they are suffering from a physical or mental condition or disorder (such as a substance use disorder, or a mental or psychiatric disorder), which requires that restrictions be placed on their practice or that they must be removed from practice in the interest of the public. The College often receives information about a pharmacy professional through a mandatory report from an employer or facility operator, or from a self-report by the practitioner. The Fitness to Practise Committee considers incapacity matters referred by the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee.



COMPLAINTS AND REPORTS

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AND REPORTS OPENED IN 2021



604

Complaints opened



118

Reports opened

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS APPEAL AND REVIEW BOARD

REQUESTS AT THE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS APPEAL AND REVIEW BOARD (HPARB) IN 2021

47 new requests for review received in 2021

20 from pharmacy professionals

27 from complainants

30 decisions received from HPARB

26 upheld

4 referred back to ICRC

DISTRIBUTION OF DISCIPLINE FINDING BY TYPE IN 2021

Contravene relevant Acts	56
Dishonourable, disgraceful, unprofessional	48
False or misleading document	48
Fail to maintain Standard	45
Falsifying records	25
Failure to keep appropriate records	12

ICRC DECISIONS



713

Total decisions issued by the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC)

DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE ORDERS BY TYPE IN 2021

Revocation	3
Suspension	31
Terms, Conditions and Limitations on a Certificate of Registration	32
Reprimand	35
Undertaking	4

There were 35 discipline orders issued in 2021. More than one type of discipline order may be issued together.



39

Registrants with allegations referred to discipline

For a complete breakdown of statistics depicted in these infographics, please refer to the 2021 Supplementary Data Report or the College Performance Measurement Framework



# Additional highlights from 2021

The College is proud to share some additional 2021 highlights that demonstrate its focus on fulfilling its mandate and supporting pharmacy professionals in meeting standards and delivering safe, quality care.



## SUPPORTING THE DELIVERY OF SAFE PHARMACY CARE

- Supported the implementation of non-sterile compounding standards through the development of resources, educational tools and articles.
- Proposed an extension to [O. Reg. 202/94 \(General\)](#) of the *Pharmacy Act*, 1991—which was approved by the provincial government—allowing pharmacists to renew and adapt prescriptions for controlled drugs and substances (CDS) until at least September 30, 2026. This extension enabled a Health Canada extension to the [Controlled Drugs and Substances Act \(CDSA\) subsection 56\(1\) class exemption](#), and aligned the revocation dates.
- In collaboration with government, and with support from associations, clinical viewers were made available to all community pharmacies through Ontario Health, providing a dynamic, near real-time view of patients' health information.
- As part of its Quality Assurance Program, the College expanded practice assessments to pharmacists in Part A of the Public Register working in hospital and other healthcare facilities, and announced the 2022 rollout of the new knowledge assessment for pharmacists in Part A of the Register.
- Began updating the Boundary Violations and Sexual Abuse Policy to align with changes to provincial regulations and laws, including the *Protecting Patients Act*, and to reinforce registrants' responsibilities as they relate to the prevention of sexual abuse of a patient. The policy is expected to be completed and published in early 2022.
- Promoted mental health services and programs available to health and pharmacy professionals, including the free Pharmacy Health Program administered by Lifemark Health, that help promote and support mental health and resiliency.

## THE COLLEGE PUBLISHED OR UPDATED A NUMBER OF POLICIES AND PRACTICE GUIDELINES IN 2021, INCLUDING:



- [Restocking of Drugs Used for Medical Assistance in Dying \(MAiD\) During COVID-19](#), with the intent that it be in effect only for the duration of the current health emergency



- Revising the [Protecting the Cold Chain](#) policy to a [Guideline](#), outlining the expectations for maintaining the quality and integrity of medications that are temperature-sensitive



- Amending its [Virtual Care Policy](#) to outline the practice expectations for registrants who choose to provide care to patients using virtual approaches



- Updating guidance on [COVID-19 Testing in Community Pharmacies](#)
- Updating guidance on [Administration of COVID-19 Vaccine by Pharmacy Professionals](#)



PROMOTING INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND BROADENING THE FOCUS ON EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Cultivating Indigenous cultural competency among non-Indigenous Board members, College staff and registrants remains a Board-defined priority, and the following achievements in 2021 furthered the College’s continued focus on this important equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work:


- Published a webpage with [resources for pharmacy professionals to support Indigenous cultural competency](#), providing links to a number of free resources that explore Indigenous identity and history, truth and reconciliation and culturally competent healthcare.
- Guest speakers shared their insights with the College’s Board of Directors, including a presentation on National Indigenous History Month by Dr. Jaris Swidrovich, Canada’s first self-identified First Nations Doctor of Pharmacy, and an educational session on unconscious bias by Dr. Javeed Sukhera. College staff were also invited to participate in a session on Indigenous Cultural Competency by educator Troy Hill.
- Recruited an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Policy Advisor to manage the design and implementation of an EDI strategy with a focus on regulatory policies and programs impacting registrants.
- Advanced emerging EDI priorities focused on our role as both an employer and as a regulator. This included the development of an internal EDI strategy and first steps in the development of a regulatory EDI strategy informed, in part, through our ongoing participation in the HPRO anti-BIPOC racism and discrimination working group.

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Involving registrants, health system stakeholders and patients in the College’s work is a top priority, and several achievements showcase our focus on enhancing engagement and communication in 2021, including:

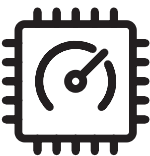
- Continuing to welcome and promote opportunities for greater public and pharmacy professional involvement as members of statutory and standing committees, in accordance with the College’s renewed governance framework.
- Holding open consultations to seek feedback from pharmacy professionals and patients on draft [Virtual Care](#) and [Cross-Jurisdictional Services](#) policies.
- Recruiting pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to be part of a Provider Experience Working Group, as part of the [Quality Indicators](#) initiative. Pharmacy professionals across the province were subsequently invited to provide feedback on the shortlist of provider experience indicators developed by the working group.
- Leveraging e-Connect and other communication channels to keep registrants up to date with frequent, timely news during a rapidly changing healthcare, pharmacy and regulatory landscape.
- Moving to a digital format for [Pharmacy Connection](#), improving timelier access to important information, tips, news and updates, and giving registrants quick and easy access to practice-related information.

**PHARMACYCONNECTION.CA** – which launched July 30, 2021 – had **43,635** users and **97,594** page views by year-end.



# Supplementary information

In addition to this annual report, a number of documents are made publicly available as part of the College’s [commitment to accountability and transparency](#).



## COLLEGE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK (CPMF)

[Read the CPMF](#)

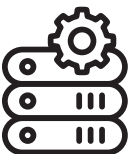
The College Performance Measurement Framework (CPMF) is an annual submission to the Ministry of Health that is intended to strengthen the accountability and oversight of Ontario’s health regulatory colleges by providing information that is transparent, consistent and aligned across all colleges on their performance in serving the public’s interest. The CPMF consists of seven domains: Governance, Resources, System Partners, Information Management, Regulatory Policies, Suitability to Practice, and Measurement, Reporting and Improvement. Within each domain, specific components such as standards, measures, evidence and planned improvement activities set out expectations and requirements for the colleges to include/respond to in their submitted reports to the Ministry.



## COLLEGE SCORECARD

[Read the College Scorecard](#)

The College Scorecard reports on the College’s progress against the CPMF domains and priorities defined in the strategic framework. Produced on a quarterly basis and released at each scheduled Board meeting, the Scorecard is a valuable accountability and quality improvement tool for the College.



## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITIES

The [Strategic Framework and Priorities](#) is the foundation upon which the College plans activities, focuses human and financial resources, and holds itself accountable.



## 2021 SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

[Read the Summary Financial Statements](#)

The Summary Financial Statements include a summary statements of the College’s financial position, cash flows, operations and net assets for the previous fiscal year. This document is prepared by an independent auditor.



## SUPPLEMENTARY DATA REPORT

[Read the Supplementary Data Report](#)

The Supplementary Data Report is intended to provide a transparent view of trends over the past several years for a number of data points that were historically published in the annual report.



## DISCIPLINE DECISIONS

[Read the Discipline Decisions](#)

The College publishes decisions of the Discipline Committee in Pharmacy Connection. A notation and summary of each discipline finding is also available on the pharmacy professional’s profile on the [Find a Pharmacy or Pharmacy Professional](#) tool on the College’s website. Once complete, the full written decision for each hearing is available on [www.canlii.org](http://www.canlii.org)

