



Backgrounder: *Pharmacists Regulation*

Why was there a need to make changes to existing legislation?

The previous legislation for pharmacists was first created in 1955 and was no longer current with pharmacist regulation in other Canadian jurisdictions. The *Pharmacists Regulation*, which regulates pharmacy professionals in Yukon, contains many new requirements that will lead to significant improvements for pharmacists, the healthcare system and the public.

What exactly are the changes?

The *Pharmacists Regulation* introduces changes to licensing and practice requirements for both pharmacists and rural permit holders. It also introduces changes to the scope of practice for pharmacists.

Key licensing and practice requirement changes include introducing the following:

- Standards of practice and a code of ethics that pharmacists and rural permit holders must follow;
- A jurisprudence exam (exam that tests understanding of laws, regulations and standards) for both fully licensed pharmacists and rural permit holders;
- A requirement for pharmacists to hold liability insurance and a valid licence in another Canadian jurisdiction;
- A requirement for pharmacists and rural permit holders to complete at least 15 hours of continuing education every year;
- Provisional and student registration that will allow for student pharmacists and entry-to-practice training in Yukon (with oversight from another jurisdiction).

The Regulation also allows pharmacists to:

- adapt prescriptions in the following ways:
 - extending an existing prescription one-time beyond what the original prescription, if a patient is not able to see their doctor for a refill;
 - alter an existing prescription under certain circumstances;
 - substitute a generic drug or one drug for another, if it has a similar therapeutic effect;
- administer drugs to patients by eye, ear, nose, mouth or skin;
- give injections to patients more than five-years old (this does not include intravenous injections);
- access and use patient medical lab test results.

Finally, the Regulation will also establish a pharmacists advisory committee that will provide advice and help maintain standards of practice.

Does the entire regulation come into effect August 1, 2019?

The *Pharmacists Regulation* comes into effect in its entirety on August 1, 2019. However, pharmacists and rural permit holders will be given added time to meet the following licensing requirements:

- Pharmacists will have until August 1, 2021 to obtain licensing in another jurisdiction – if they do not have it already.
- Pharmacists and rural permit holders must successfully pass a jurisprudence exam by August 1, 2021.
- Pharmacists will have until August 1, 2020 to meet continuing education requirements.

When did this project begin? What is the current timeline?

The Government of Yukon began work on the broader Pharmacy Initiative in April 2014. This work began with a stakeholder engagement to support the development of modern legislation for both pharmacists (the professions) and pharmacies (the establishments).

In 2018, we decided to divide the Pharmacy Initiative into two separate projects: 1) regulations for pharmacists (the professionals) and 2) regulations for pharmacies (the establishments). We made this decision to support efficiencies for the broader initiative. Since then, we have focused on completing the *Pharmacists Regulation*, which regulates professionals. We are pleased that regulations for pharmacists will take effect in August this year.

Our work to develop regulations for pharmacy establishments is continuing. Once these regulations are finished, the Pharmacy and Drug Act, which was passed in 2015, will come into force. Our current timeline is to have regulations for pharmacies and rural dispensaries in place in 2020.