

LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR SCOPE OF PRACTICE / AUTHORIZED ACTS

****Portions of this chart are not applicable at this time due to the Subsection 56(1) Class Exemption issued by Health Canada****

March 26, 2020: Important update regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Updated: September 30, 2021; November 10, 2021; November 23, 2021; July 1, 2022; January 1, 2023

Health Canada has issued a *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) subsection 56(1) class exemption for pharmacists from the provisions of:

- Subsection 31(1), and section 37 of the [Narcotic Control Regulations](#) (NCR)
- Sections G.03.002 and G.03.006 of Part G of the [Food and Drug Regulations](#) (FDR)
- Paragraphs 52 (c) and (d), subsection 54(1) of the [Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances Regulations](#).

This exemption expires on the earliest of the following: **September 30, 2026**; the date it is replaced by another exemption; or the date it is revoked.

While this exemption is in effect,

- Pharmacists may dispense any narcotic pursuant to a written or verbal order from a practitioner
- Pharmacists may dispense a refill of a previous narcotic or controlled drug prescription pursuant to a written or verbal order from a practitioner
- Pharmacists may transfer prescriptions of narcotics and controlled drugs to another pharmacist in Canada and prescriptions that have already been transferred may be transferred again to another pharmacist
- Prescriptions for a benzodiazepine or other targeted substance that have already been transferred, may be transferred to another pharmacist in Canada
- Prescriptions for a benzodiazepine or other targeted substance may be refilled if more than one year has elapsed since the date it was issued by the prescriber
- Pharmacists may adapt and/or renew prescriptions for controlled substances for the purposes of facilitating continuation of treatment
 - Provincial regulations under the *Pharmacy Act* have also been amended to enable pharmacists in Ontario to renew and adapt prescriptions (including de-prescribing) for controlled substances (narcotics, controlled drugs and targeted substances).

References:

- [Health Canada Subsection 56\(1\) Class Exemption for Patients, Practitioners and Pharmacists Prescribing and Providing Controlled Substances in Canada](#)
- [Prescription management by pharmacists with controlled substances](#)
- [Subsection 56\(1\) Class Exemption– Frequently asked questions](#)

LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR SCOPE OF PRACTICE / AUTHORIZED ACTS¹

*The activities permitted by the Health Canada s.56 exemption are NOT reflected in the chart below.
Please refer to page 1 for details.

Pharmacist (RPh) in Part A	Registered Pharmacy Student ² / Intern ³		Pharmacy Technician (RPhT) ⁴
Provide information & educate patients			✓ Not if clinical or therapeutic
Dispense, sell and compound drugs ⁵	✓		✓ Technical aspects of prescription/ product preparation and release only
Accept verbal prescriptions *Refer to s.56 exemption on Page 1			✓ For drugs on the Prescription Drug List only, not controlled substances ⁶
Authorize prescription transfers ⁷ *Refer to s.56 exemption on Page 1			✓ Except for benzodiazepines and other targeted substances
Authorize delegation of a controlled act ⁸	X		X
Accept/implement delegation of a controlled act ⁸	X Student	✓ Intern	✓
Supervise a pharmacy			X

This is only a summary. Refer to legislation for detailed information. Go to www.ocpinfo.com for additional resources, policies and guidelines.

¹ Pharmacy Act s3, s4

^{2,3} Under supervision and according to the terms, conditions and limitations of O. Reg. 202/94 s12, s15

⁴ Under supervision and according to the terms, conditions and limitations of O. Reg. 202/94 s18

⁵ Drug and Pharmacies Regulations Act (DPRA) s149; O. Reg. 264/16 s4

⁶ Food & Drug Regulations, C.01.041

⁷ Narcotics & controlled drugs cannot be transferred. Benzodiazepines & other targeted substances can be transferred once. *Refer to s.56 exemption on Page 1

⁸ Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) s32

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*The activities permitted by the **Health Canada s.56 exemption** are NOT reflected in the chart below.
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Pharmacist (RPh) in Part A	Registered Pharmacy Student ² / Intern ³	Pharmacy Technician (RPhT) ⁴
Prescribe for the purpose of initiating smoking cessation therapy with varenicline or bupropion ⁹		
Prescribe for the purpose of treating a minor ailment listed in Schedule 4 with a drug in the corresponding AHFS classification ⁹		X
Prescribe for the purpose of renewing and/or adapting an existing prescription (except for monitored drugs ; no therapeutic substitution) ¹⁰ *Refer to s.56 exemption on Page 1		
Perform a procedure on tissue below dermis (piercing with a lancet-type device to obtain blood) to demonstrate proper use or perform a point-of-care test listed in O. Reg. 45/22 ¹¹	✓	✓ If performing a point-of-care test , a Part A pharmacist interprets the results
Administer a substance in Schedule 1 of the regulations by injection or in Schedule 2 by inhalation for the purpose of education and demonstration (with approved training) ¹²		X
Administer a vaccine in Schedule 3 of the regulations to patients five years of age or older (with approved training) ¹²		X
Administer publicly funded influenza vaccine in Ontario's Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) to patients two years of age or older (with approved training) ¹²		✓

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⁹O. Reg. 202/94 s35

¹⁰O. Reg. 202/94 s31, s36

¹¹O. Reg. 202/94 s39

¹²O. Reg. 202/94 s34