

Expansion of pharmacists' practice will benefit patients

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Cara Tannenbaum, M.D., from the Université de Montréal, and Ross T. Tsuyuki, Pharm.D., from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, discuss the implications for physicians of the recent legislative and regulatory changes supporting a broadening of the scope of pharmacists' practice across Canada.

According to the researchers, in the context of the broadening of the scope of practice, pharmacists are now able to renew, refuse to fill, adjust, initiate, or substitute prescriptions; they can order and interpret laboratory tests; and they can administer injections and vaccines. Based on a review of the evidence, patients are likely to benefit from pharmacist participation in vaccination efforts and from [drug management](#) for clinical indications such as diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia, [anticoagulation](#), and adverse drug events. For physicians, overlapping scopes of practice with pharmacists may have ethical, legal, financial, and professional implications. To ensure patient safety during this transition period and henceforth, effective communication is key.

"The expanding scope of pharmacists' practice offers many opportunities to improve patient care," the authors write. "However, it is also an ongoing process that must be evaluated as regulated activities change, new pharmacists enter practice, and scopes of activities continue to expand."

The authors disclosed [financial ties](#) to the pharmaceutical industry.

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