

May 14, 2020

BULLETIN to Physicians Regarding Temporary Provisional Licences and Changes to Pharmacists' Scope of Practice

Provisional Licences

The College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada have postponed their regularly scheduled June 2020 entry to practice examinations as a response to COVID-19. This affects the ability of new medical practitioners to be licensed in Yukon.

In response to this, Yukon through Ministerial Order 2020/29 under the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* has created a provisional category of registration and licensing for candidates eligible for full registration with the exception of the qualifying exam.

These physicians will be entitled to practice within the full scope of a physician under a full licence and there will be no supervision requirement. Yukon Medical Council encourages the use of informal mentorship with locums and other provisional licensees.

This is a temporary category of licence with a limited duration. The licensees will be required to write the applicable exam at the first sitting available to them. The licence will remain valid for 30 days after the results of the exam are received. If a passing grade is received, the provisional licensee will be moved to the full medical register. If a non-passing grade is received, the licence will be revoked.

Candidates who are interested in applying for a temporary provisional licence may contact ymc@gov.yk.ca for further details on the application process and requirements.

Changes to Pharmacists' Scope of Practice

In an effort to support pharmacists in provision of critical services to Yukoners during the emergency declared in Yukon on March 27, 2020, temporary changes to the scope of practice for pharmacists have been made by Ministerial Order under the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*.

Of note to physicians are the following changes. All expire 30 days after the declared civil emergency ends.

- 1) Pharmacists can now extend prescriptions more than once. The usual requirements of being not reasonably possible for the patient to see a prescriber and an immediate need to continue drug therapy are waived.

Because of a s.56 Health Canada exemption to the *Controlled Drug and Substances Act*, the ability to extend also applies to controlled substances. However, if the prescription is for methadone or suboxone an extension can only be made for a maximum of 7 days.

- 2) Pharmacists do not need to notify prescribers of prescription adaptations, except for prescriptions for controlled substances which continue to require notification.



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- 3) Pharmacists can now prescribe at initial access, other than for controlled substances, for a prescribed list of minor ailments as outlined in **Temporary Standard of Practice 20.**

Please note that changes relating to controlled substances are governed by Health Canada under the *Controlled Drug and Substances Act (CDSA)* and will be affected by the timing of the s.56 exemption in place, which is set to remain in effect until it is revoked, replaced, or on September 30, 2020, whichever occurs first.