

PHARMACY TECHNICIAN REGULATION FAQs

Note: These FAQs support the overall information provided on the [College website](#) regarding regulated technicians and should be read in conjunction. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please email: pharmacytech@bcpharmacists.org

FAQ:

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GENERAL

Do I have to become a regulated pharmacy technician?

No, becoming a regulated pharmacy technician is voluntary; however, regulation will restrict the title of "pharmacy technician" and therefore, those who choose not to become regulated, or are unsuccessful in becoming regulated, will no longer be able to refer to themselves as pharmacy technicians as of January 1, 2011 and will likely be called 'pharmacy assistants'.

What is regulation/certification/registration?

'Registration', 'Certification' and 'Regulation' are different terms that are currently being used to describe the same thing:

- Establishes a new 'regulated healthcare professional'
- Establishes a new member (registrant) with the College of Pharmacists of BC
- Restricts the title 'pharmacy technician' effective January 1, 2011
- Holds the 'pharmacy technician' responsible, accountable and liable for a specific scope of practice (job description)

When will 'pharmacy technician' become a restricted title?

The Ministry of Health Services (MOHS) approved the restriction of the title 'pharmacy technician' ([amendment](#)) effective January 1, 2011. At the same time, the MOHS approved the revised [HPA Bylaws](#) which was the final step in the approval process regarding the legislative authority to register pharmacy technicians as registrants of the College of Pharmacists of BC.

What will my responsibilities be (Scope of Practice) as a regulated pharmacy technician?

Specifically, regulated pharmacy technicians will have independent authority, responsibility and liability (required by legislation to have liability insurance) to prepare, process and compound prescriptions, including:

- Ensuring the accuracy of drug and personal health information in the PharmaNet patient record
- Receiving and transcribing verbal prescriptions from practitioners (within the law)
- Ensuring that a prescription is complete and authentic
- Transferring prescriptions to and receiving prescriptions from other pharmacies (within the law)
- Ensuring the accuracy of the drug preparation
- Performing the final check of the drug preparation

Pharmacists will continue however, to be involved in every new and refill prescription as they remain solely responsible for assessing the appropriateness of drug therapy (patient assessment, confirm dose and interval, check PharmaNet profile, and identify drug interactions) and for providing patient consultation. A prescription cannot be released to a patient without a pharmacist having performed these cognitive functions.

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If I am working in a pharmacy as a regulated pharmacy technician and I make an error, will I be held liable?

Yes, regulated pharmacy technicians are recognized as healthcare professionals under the HPA and as such are granted an expanded scope of practice which allows them to have independent authority and responsibility. Along with that comes liability for their actions in the preparation, processing and compounding of prescriptions.

Will it be possible for a prescription (new or refill) to be released to a patient without a pharmacist involved in the process?

No. Pharmacists will continue to be involved in every new and refill prescription as they remain solely responsible for assessing the appropriateness of drug therapy (patient assessment, confirm dose and interval, check PharmaNet profile, and identify drug interactions) and for providing patient consultation. A prescription cannot be released to a patient without a pharmacist having performed these cognitive functions.

Will there be a different class of regulated pharmacy technician registrant for hospital and community pharmacy?

No, the scope of practice for regulated pharmacy technicians is the same regardless of practice setting. There will only be one class of registrant with the College of Pharmacists of BC. This is consistent with the pharmacists' structure.

Is liability insurance required?

Yes, in accordance with legislation, all registrants of the College are required to carry professional liability insurance that meets the following criteria:

- Provides a minimum of \$2 million coverage.
- Provides occurrence based coverage or claims made coverage with extended reporting period of at least 3 years.
- If not in the pharmacists' or regulated pharmacy technicians' name, the group policy covers the pharmacist or pharmacy technician as an individual.

Will I be required to participate in the Professional Development and Assessment Program (Continuing Education and Assessment)?

Yes, as a registrant of the College of Pharmacists of BC, you are required by legislation, just as pharmacists are, to participate and successfully complete the Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP) which includes a continuing education component and an assessment component. *(Note: the specifics of the program for regulated pharmacy technicians are currently under development.)*

CURRENT PHARMACY TECHNICIANS

What are the steps to regulation for current technicians?

In order to become a regulated pharmacy technician, current technicians will need to successfully complete the required steps outlined here: http://www.bcpharmacists.org/about_us/key_initiatives/index/articles27.php#Current

When do I need to pre-register with the College?

Pre-registration with the College of Pharmacists of BC is required prior to registering for the Bridging Program for those on the 'Current Technicians' path. The application form for pre-registration is available on the College website, http://www.bcpharmacists.org/forms/pharmacy_technician_registration.php.

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Is it true that I am required to have a Criminal Record Check?

Yes, in accordance with legislation, all current and new registrants of the College of Pharmacists of BC are required to consent to a criminal record check every 5 years. It is a requirement of the *Criminal Records Review Act* and is applicable to current and new registrants of all professional regulatory bodies governed by the HPA. Additional information is available here: http://www.bcpharmacists.org/library/A-About_Us/A-8_Key_Initiatives/5096-HPA_Criminal_Record_Check_FAQ.pdf

What is Structured Practical Evaluation (SPE)?

The Management of Drug Distribution Systems (MDDS) Bridging Program module will be followed by a Structured Practical Evaluation (SPE) to verify the learner's ability to consistently perform accurate product release in the workplace (independent double check). The SPE is administered by the College of Pharmacists of BC and is targeted to launch by the end of 2010.

How do I know if I meet the minimum requirement of 2000 hours of 'pharmacy practice' in the past 3 years?

The PEBC website (<http://pebc.ca/PharmacyTechnicians/index.html>) defines what are acceptable pharmacy practice activities. Prior to sitting the PEBC Evaluating Exam or enrolling in the Bridging Program, technicians must provide documentation from their supervisor verifying that they meet this minimum requirement.

Is the Bridging Program mandatory?

Yes, the completion of the Bridging Program is required by all current technicians seeking regulation. For more information on the Bridging Program click here: http://www.bcpharmacists.org/about_us/key_initiatives/index/articles27.php#Current

How long does the online Bridging Program take?

The structure for the online Bridging Program is designed to mirror the in-class Bridging Program in length, however it is still under development and the exact format is still being finalized. It is not intended to be an expedited means of completing the Bridging Program.

Why is the Professional Practice module in the Bridging Program mandatory and not eligible for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)?

As this is a new regulated profession and this module deals with the legal and ethical obligations of a regulated technician, technicians would have no prior experience or knowledge in this area, and therefore, it would not be possible to challenge it.

Is the PEBC Evaluating Exam mandatory?

Yes, the completion of PEBC Evaluating Exam is required by all current technicians seeking regulation. The only exceptions, as per PEBC's policy, are those who hold certification from either PTCB-AB (up to 2008) or OCP (up to 2008), or have completed an accredited pharmacist degree program in Canada or in the Continental United States, do not need to sit the PEBC Evaluating Exam but are still required to complete the Bridging Program.

How do I know what to study for the PEBC Evaluating Exam?

For information on how to prepare for the PEBC Evaluating Exam, please refer to the Pharmacy Technician Evaluating Examination Information Booklet 2010 on the PEBC website: <http://pebc.ca/PharmacyTechnicians/EnglishGraphics/PTEvalBooklet2010.pdf>

What is the cost of the PEBC Evaluating Exam?

Exam fees are not set by the College of Pharmacists of BC but rather PEBC. Current fee information can be found on the PEBC website: www.pebc.ca

When is the PEBC Evaluating Exam offered?

The PEBC Evaluating Exam is offered by PEBC nationally two times per year in key locations across Canada. More details on the PEBC Evaluating Exam, including the exam sitting schedule, are available at www.pebc.ca.

How many opportunities do I have to pass the PEBC Evaluating Exam?

Candidates are permitted a maximum of three (3) attempts for the PEBC Evaluating Examination, with one, final (fourth) attempt available upon successful completion of remediation as specified by the PEBC Board. For more information please visit www.pebc.ca

Do I need to take a Jurisprudence Exam (JE)?

Yes, the requirement to successfully complete a Jurisprudence Exam is consistent with the registration process for pharmacists and is designed to test relevant provincial legislation and ethics which is not included on the national PEBC Qualifying Exam. The Jurisprudence Exam will be included in the mandatory Professional Practice module of the Bridging Program for those on the 'current pharmacy technicians' path.

What is the format of the PEBC Qualifying Exam?

The PEBC Qualifying Exam consists of two parts, which is consistent with the pharmacists' exam:

Part 1: Written multiple choice question (MCQ) exam

Part 2: Performance based exam called an Objective Structured Performance Exam (OSPE)

For more information on the PEBC Qualifying Exams, please visit www.pebc.ca.

When is the PEBC Qualifying Exam offered?

The PEBC Qualifying Exam is offered by PEBC nationally at key locations twice a year. For more information, including the Exam Schedule, please visit www.pebc.ca

Can I sit the PEBC Qualifying Exam before completing the Bridging Program?

Yes, but it is not recommended. If you have successfully completed the PEBC Evaluating Exam (or hold certification from PTCB-AB (up to 2008) or OCP (up to 2008), which exempts you from having to sit the PEBC Evaluating Exam), you can choose to sit the PEBC Qualifying Exam prior to completing the Bridging Program, however, the College strongly recommends that you complete the Bridging Program first.

The content within the Bridging Program is specific to the expanded scope of practice for regulated pharmacy technicians and should therefore help technicians prepare for the PEBC Qualifying Exam. It is also important to note that successful completion of the PEBC Qualifying Exam does not exempt you from the Bridging Program. You must successfully complete all the required steps outlined on the College website at:

http://www.bcpharmacists.org/about_us/key_initiatives/index/articles27.php#Current prior to the College registering you as a regulated pharmacy technician.

As a 'current pharmacy technician', how long do I have to go through the process of regulation?

The 'current pharmacy technician' path is only available until 2015. In other words, current technicians utilizing this path must have completed all of the required steps before the end of 2015. It is intended to provide current technicians the opportunity to become regulated without having to go back to school full-time. After 2015, current technicians who wish to become regulated will have to take the steps described under the 'future pharmacy technician' path.

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FUTURE PHARMACY TECHNICIANS

What are the steps to regulation for ‘future pharmacy technicians’?

In order to become a regulated pharmacy technician, ‘future pharmacy technicians’ will need to successfully complete the required steps outlined on the College website at :

http://www.bcpharmacists.org/about_us/key_initiatives/index/articles27.php#Future

Who determines which post-secondary programs are accredited?

The Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP), which is the same organization that accredits pharmacists’ programs, is responsible for accrediting ‘regulated pharmacy technician’ programs in Canada. The accreditation process ensures that accredited programs contain the necessary content to teach the competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) necessary for successful graduates to safely and effectively do the job of a regulated pharmacy technician. See: <http://www.ccapp-accredit.ca/index.php>

Which post-secondary institutions are currently offering a CCAPP Accredited Pharmacy Technician Program?

Please check the CCAPP website for the list of Accredited Pharmacy Technician Programs: <http://www.ccapp-accredit.ca/documents/> and the CPBC website at

http://www.bcpharmacists.org/about_us/key_initiatives/index/articles27.php#Future for more information.

When do I need to pre-register with the College?

Pre-registration with the College of Pharmacists of BC is required prior to starting the Structured Practical Training (SPT) for those on the ‘Future Pharmacy Technicians’ path. The application form for pre-registration is available on the College website, http://www.bcpharmacists.org/forms/pharmacy_technician_registration.php.

Is it true that I am required to have a Criminal Record Check?

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Additional information is available here: http://www.bcpharmacists.org/library/A-About_Us/A-8_Key_Initiatives/5096-HPA_Criminal_Record_Check_FAQ.pdf

Why do I need to take Structured Practical Training (SPT)?

Once a student has graduated from a CCAPP Accredited Program, the next step is to successfully complete a Structured Practical Training (SPT) program; a supervised competency based training period within a pharmacy that includes regular assessment by a pharmacist or another regulated technician. SPT provides the student an opportunity to apply the knowledge, skills and abilities they learned in their training program to practice, in a supervised environment. SPT is administered by the College of Pharmacists of BC and is targeted to launch by the end of 2010 (Note: Pre-registration as a Pharmacy Technician with the College of Pharmacists of BC is required prior to registering for the Structured Practical Training. The Application for Pre-Registration is available on the College website http://www.bcpharmacists.org/library/K-Forms/K-9_PharmacyTechnician/9049-PT_PreReg_CanNewGrad.pdf).

Why do I need to take a Jurisprudence Exam?

The requirement to successfully complete a Jurisprudence Exam is consistent with the registration process for pharmacists and is designed to test relevant provincial legislation and ethics which is not included on the national PEBC Qualifying Exam. The Jurisprudence exam is administered by the College of Pharmacists of BC and is available now http://www.bcpharmacists.org/forms/pharmacy_technician_registration.php.

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