

EVOLVE

NEWSLETTER

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About EVOLVE:

- **Mission:** Focusing on pharmacy's expanded scope of practice to promote student collaboration and empower them towards better patient care
- **Vision:** Developing a culture geared towards nurturing future pharmacy professionals in the interest of improving health outcomes and ensuring patient-centered care
- **Values:** Surpass, Cultivate, Optimize, Passion, Empower

The Importance of Advocacy in the Development and Adoption of Expanded Scope



Sherif Guorgui
Vice President, Pharmacy, Ontario
Pharmacists Association

In my opinion, professional advocacy is the cornerstone of pharmacy. Through advocacy, the profession is able to play an active role in influencing practice and economic legislation, regulations, standards and policies. In fact, in 2009, following intensive lobbying and advocacy work by the Ontario Pharmacists Association (OPA), the provincial government approved Bill 179, which expanded the scope of practice for pharmacists in this province. When the regulations under this law were passed in 2012, OPA began providing the ongoing leadership and support needed to help pharmacists adopt and implement the expanded scope activities in their daily practice by identifying and developing the necessary education and practice tools, forms, services and resources.

As the strains on the healthcare system continue to grow, so do the opportu-

nities for pharmacists to become more actively involved in managing the health outcomes of their patients. Further enhancements to the scope of practice are not optional. In fact, OPA is advocating with the Ontario government, the Ontario College of Pharmacists and other stakeholders for further scope expansion to enable pharmacists to assess and treat common ailments, expand the number and type of immunizations that pharmacists can administer, and extend the pharmacy-based smoking cessation program to help all Ontarians who want to quit.

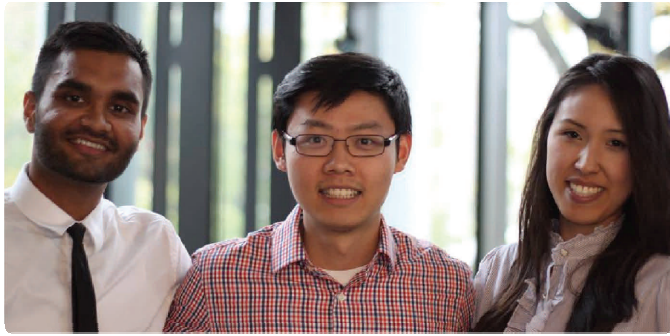
The importance of advocacy in the development and adoption of expanded scope cannot be understated - it plays a vital part in inspiring and enabling members of the profession (pharmacists, pharmacy students and pharmacy technicians) to practice to their full potential and to aim for the highest standards of excellence in patient care. Ultimately, this will showcase the value of the role pharmacy professionals play in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the healthcare system every day.

In conclusion, it is truly a privilege to be actively involved in the advocacy efforts of the profession. I commend you on the path that you've embarked on through EVOLVE, and encourage all pharmacy students to follow suit and get involved in shaping the future of pharmacy.

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Introducing EVOLVE: Embracing Ventures and Orientating Leaders to Value Expanded Scope



Veeral Gohil, Thomas Huang, and Chia Hui Chung
EVOLVE Founders

As many of us have heard, the world of pharmacy is undergoing tremendous change. Huge strides have been made towards advancing the role of pharmacists in a direction that is more clinical and patient-centered. The expanded scope of practice is a set of services (e.g., administering injections or inhalations, initiating a prescription, etc.) that have been enabled through the passage of Bill 179, the Regulated Health Professions Statute Law Amendment Act, such that pharmacists are now able to deliver better patient care in a multitude of ways.

On a national level, Canada recognizes the need for expanding our scope of practice, but the types of services that pharmacists can provide vary from province-to-province. Figure 1 highlights these differences between each province (see below).

Four years ago, after the cutbacks of generic products from the government, many pharmacies became less sustainable and were forced to redesign current business models to remain profitable. Expanded scope services have allowed the redefinition of pharmacy as a profession moving towards a more clinical, patient-focused practice. In congruence to this important paradigm shift, we as students should be encouraged to take an active interest.

Students hold a unique role as we are not only responsible for being competent in providing these services, but we also hold responsibility in the refinement and innovation of how they will be provided in the future. A strong understanding of the current scope of practice as well as its implications will also help ease transitioning into practice. We hope that early exposure to its potential will inspire students to adopt these practices and plant seeds to

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Figure 1

The current scope of practice that has been either implemented, pending legislation or not implemented in all provinces and territories thus far.

Expanded Scope	Province/Territory												
	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	NWT	YT	NU
Provide emergency prescription refills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	^{7,8} P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Renew/extend prescriptions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⁷ P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Change drug dosage/formulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	^{7,8} P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Make therapeutic substitution	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	^{7,8} P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Prescribe for minor ailments/conditions	✗	¹ ✓	✓	✓	✗	^{7,8} P	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Initiate prescription drug therapy	✗	✓	² ✓	✓	⁵ ✓	^{7,8} P	¹⁰ ✓	² ✓	² ✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Order and interpret lab tests	✗	✓	³ P	✓	³ P	⁷ P	⁷ P	¹¹ P	¹¹ P	✗	✗	✗	✗
Administer a drug by injection	✓	✓	³ P	✓	⁶ ✓	^{7,9} P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Regulated Pharmacy Technicians	✓	✓	³ P	³ P	✓	✗	³ P	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗

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wards the future of our expanded scope in our profession.

As future pharmacists, it is imperative to fully understand the professional climate that we will be immersed in. In turn, this will allow us to understand the urgency in demonstrating our value added to the health care system through our engagement in expanded scope activities. Our newsletter articles written by our EVOLVE Leadership Team and Newsletter Committee will serve to dissect the current issues of pharmacy practice that matter the most to pharmacy students. In addition, our webinars presented by our Webinar Committee on the EVOLVE website will provide you with up-to-date information on selected expanded scope topics. Online and in-person group discussions will be facilitated after each webinar as we wish to provide an open forum that enables you to ask questions, share

your opinions and even challenge current assumptions related to expanded scope!

Combining our efforts by working together as a collective body of pharmacists is critical in driving our profession forward.² As such, EVOLVE believes that this sense of community should be cultivated at the peak of our education, as pharmacy students, in order to fully capitalize on the opportunities created by our current scope. Moreover, it is our hope that these high-level interactions extend outside of the classroom, such that we, as students, can engage in enriching conversations about the current scope with our preceptors during our EPE placements and APPE rotations.

With that said, welcome to EVOLVE! We look forward to collaborating with you to shape the pharmacy profession into an increasingly sustainable and patient-centered practice!

Shining the Light of Advocacy of Pharmacy Services on Patients



Priya Patel
Newsletter Committee

Advocacy is important to fuel the progression of pharmacy services in Canada. Although pharmacists themselves are an important target group, patients are also important to consider. At the end of the day, expanded scope services are aimed at improving patient outcomes. Patients should be well-educated in what pharmacists have to offer to the care of their health.

Once patients are convinced of the positive impact that pharmacists have on their health, it may be a stepping stone to help convince the government to further expand the scope of practice. Organizations such as the Canadian Pharmacists Association

(CPhA) are dedicated to advocating for the profession of pharmacy. This type of work is critical in advancing the practice of pharmacists in Ontario and Canada. If the focus of advocacy is shifted to patients, it can provide a path to improve the uptake of expanded scope pharmacy services. When patients are empowered with knowledge of pharmacy services and the value they add to the betterment of their health, they can make informed decisions about engaging in health care services offered by pharmacists. This leads to more patients being positively impacted by pharmacy services. Advocacy can lead to this outcome if patients become the focus of the message.

One strategy can be to encourage patients to understand the benefits of medication review services, such as MedsChecks. These are services which the pharmacist can advocate to patients and educate them about its value. This can help improve patient outcomes and lead to more pharmacists engaging in expanded scope services. This approach is one which turns the focus of advocacy from the pharmacist to the patient. This advocacy technique can be a good way to get the services to the people who will benefit from it the most.

Expanded Scope Practice Advocacy Starts with You — A Look into Pharmacy Personalities



Jeffrey Tso
Research Lead

Ontario's expanded scope practices (ESP) for pharmacy reveal a new avenue for pharmacists to improve patient care.³ In addition, ESP benefit pharmacists through humanistic outcomes, such as increased self-confidence and job satisfaction.^{3,4} As pharmacy students, we play an active role in ESP advocacy to the public. But prior to this we must also ensure that we, as students, are able foster traits that will embrace ESP.

In the study *Using Personal Strengths with Intention in Pharmacy: Implications for Pharmacists, Managers, and Leaders*, Traynor et al. investigated signature

traits of pharmacy students, residents and pharmacy leaders using the Clifton StrengthsFinder Profile. Over 6 years, their qualitative data identified typical signature traits of these individual groups (see Figure 2 below). Students and residents had several dominant signature themes, including the achiever (relishes accomplishment), the learner (cultivates knowledge), the harmonizer (aims to mitigate conflict), and relator (develops strong relationships).⁵ Furthermore, the data suggested that students and residents lacked the drive for context (historical relation), significance (acknowledgement), and command (decision making).⁵ Pharmacy students and residents are the representation of the future pharmacy professionals. If they acknowledge their signature themes, then the application of these personalities would be valuable in assisting with ESP advocacy. But these are not the only beneficial applicable themes. Future pharmacy advocacy leaders would flourish by developing traits in other realms such as strategy (finding the most effective choices) and maximization (achieving fineness). Future ESP clinicians would benefit from honing restorative (able to

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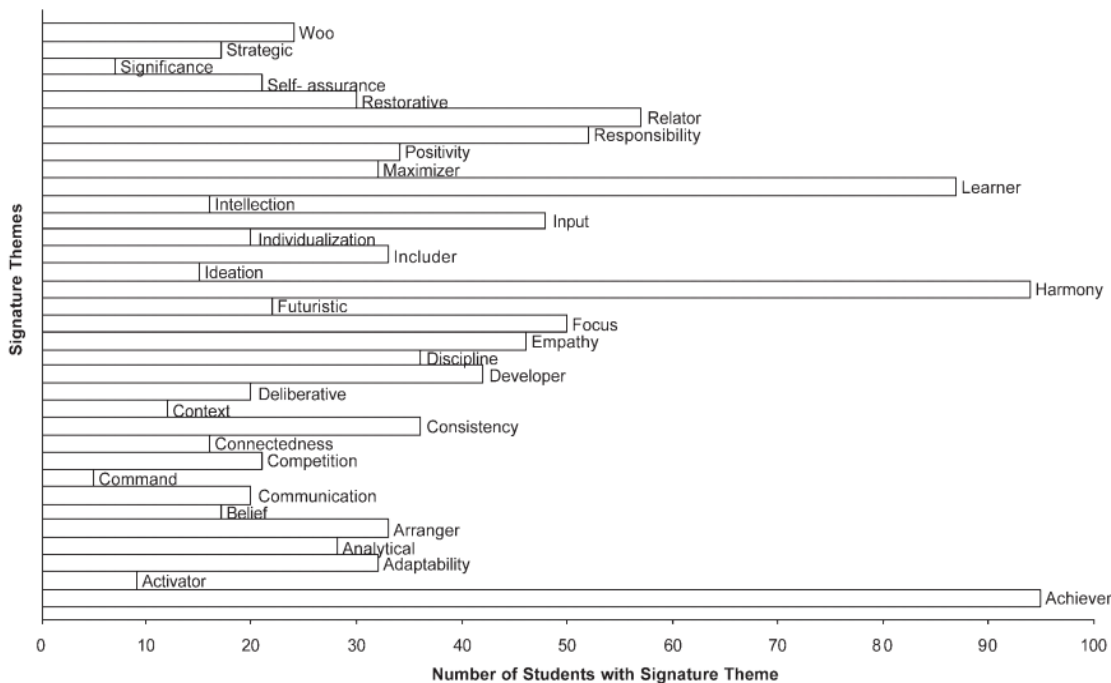
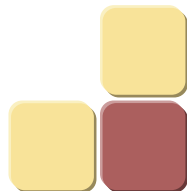


Figure 2
*Signature
pharmacy student
personality themes.*



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solve problems) and input (inquisitive) themes to better serve patients.⁵

Another recent study, *Assessing the Impact of an Expanded Scope of Practice for Pharmacists at a Community Hospital* by Hwang et al., reinforced the recommendations above by suggesting additional traits of focus. Their study conducted a qualitative analysis of prescribing pharmacist traits at a community hospital. The insight to traits of active ESP participants revealed traits needed to flourish in the increasingly clinical aspect of pharmacy. It was found that the

traits of interest were typically outside the common pharmacy palate of personalities. In essence, their needs to be a strong focus on extraversion. Traits such as confidence, ambitiousness and sociability are welcomed in the ESP field.³

The studies above indicate that pharmacy students already have favorable ESP personalities as harmonizers and relators. But we must foster other extroverted traits in order to drive our profession to its full potential. As pharmacy students, we are the future clinicians and the pharmacy leaders of tomorrow. We must be cognizant of the traits that will aid us in ESP, as its advocacy is in our hands.

The Role of Pharmacists in Education and Delivery of Influenza Vaccines is Just the Beginning



Jaspreet Deol
Director of Marketing

How has the pharmacist's role as an immunizer been beneficial you ask? Many studies show that community pharmacy involvement in the seasonal influenza vaccine program has helped increase vaccination rates.⁶ For example, a randomized control trial in England illustrated that inclusion of community pharmacies in the influenza vaccination program improved vaccination rates significantly. In addition, pharmacist involvement was associated with high patient acceptability, showing that this is a service that patients want.⁶ Influenza is especially of concern in the vulnerable elderly population, and pharmacists were able to increase vaccination rates in this group.⁷ An earlier study in the US assessed the cost-effectiveness of reimbursing community pharmacists

to advocate for the influenza vaccine.⁸ This study showed that pharmacy-based vaccine advocacy offered the economic advantage of mass media while remaining a personalized service.⁸ The analysis suggested that the increase in vaccinations would result in net savings by preventing 139 hospitalizations and 63 deaths by involving just 3 community pharmacies!

Since this expanded scope activity has been so beneficial, there has been much interest and discussion to support pharmacist's role for other vaccinations as well. One of the roles a pharmacist can take on is that of a consultant, to educate and recommend vaccines based on patient-specific factors. Pharmacists can take on vaccine advocacy roles in pharmacies, nursing homes and hospitals.⁹ A key benefit to using pharmacists as consultants is that they are easily accessible. Furthermore, as immunizers, pharmacists can ensure safety by having pharmacy-based immunization training meet or exceed quality standards in public health clinics.⁹ Considering the benefits and high level of patient acceptability, it is important to look beyond the benefits of influenza vaccination by pharmacists and allow expansion of these benefits to other vaccines allowing pharmacists to maximize their potential as educators and immunizers.

Advocating for Minor Ailment Prescribing in Ontario



Rana Khafagy
Research Lead

Change has been lagging when it comes to expanding the scope of Ontario pharmacists. With this slow change, several questions have been raised such as what is the benefit of having pharmacists partake in these new services or is this something patients want or are pharmacists ready to take on these new responsibilities? Currently, Ontario has not passed legislation allowing licensed pharmacists to prescribe for minor ailments. These conditions are self-limiting but anyone who has experience working in a pharmacy knows how troubling they can be to patients. It is one of the main reasons patients go into community pharmacies seeking advice.

This past summer, a study shed light on several advantages of allowing pharmacists to prescribe for minor ailments. During the one-year study period, patients who had been prescribed medications for minor ailments by Saskatchewan pharmacists were asked to complete a survey.¹⁰ Trust in pharmacists and convenience were the most common reasons for patients choosing pharmacists over their family physician. The study also found that 27% of patients would have gone elsewhere if the service was not available at their community pharmacy.¹⁰ This translates to 73% of patients being left with untreated, uncomfortable conditions if they cannot walk into a community pharmacy and get treatment. Over 80% of patient's conditions com-

pletely improved, with only 4% of patients reporting bothersome side effects. Hence, pharmacists are skilled at appropriately managing these conditions.¹⁰ Overall, patients were highly satisfied with this service and 94% of patients claimed they prefer a pharmacist over a physician for minor ailments prescribing.¹⁰

Although this is a small-scale study, it highlights several important points. First, this is a service patients want. To think that over 90% prefer pharmacists looking after their minor ailments needs is pivotal. If pharmacists aren't there to provide this service, 73% of patients would go untreated. This could mean that thousands of Ontario patients suffer daily from conditions that can be easily managed by their community pharmacist. Further, this is a service that is well within a pharmacist's capabilities. We are medication experts and with our extensive educational background, managing these common conditions is something we can do.

As we go into practice in these coming years, it is time to think about how we can shape the landscape of pharmacy. Services such as prescribing for minor ailments is just one way we can take a proactive role in managing our patients. Let's advocate for these services and show the Ontario government that we are more than ready to become an integral part of the healthcare system.



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