



Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board

Policy

Centralized Prescription Processing (Central Fill)

Approved September 2016

Revised September 2018

1) Introduction

Centralized prescription processing (central fill) refers to a service one licensed pharmacy provides to another where:

- an originating pharmacy receives a prescription from a patient, collects and documents relevant patient information, assesses therapeutic appropriateness, identifies and resolves drug related problems, and provides patient care; and
- a central fill pharmacy acts as an agent of the originating pharmacy to prepare and package prescription orders on the originating pharmacy's direction.

Please Note: Prescriptions for Narcotics, Controlled Drugs, Benzodiazepines and other Targeted Substances as identified in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and its accompanying regulations may not be processed by centralized prescription processing¹.

2) Conditions to be Met Prior to Participation in Central Fill Services

- a) Prior to engaging with a central fill pharmacy, the originating pharmacy must ensure that both pharmacies are located in Newfoundland and Labrador and are licensed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board.
- b) Prior to entering into an arrangement to offer central fill services, the central fill pharmacy must ensure the following requirements are met:
 - i) *Application to the Board.* The central fill pharmacy must apply to the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board, using the appropriate form, including all required information and a copy of the policy and procedure manual referred to in 2) a) ii).
 - ii) *Policy and Procedure Manual.* The central fill pharmacy must develop and maintain a policy and procedure manual outlining, at a minimum:
 - The workflow involved in processing each prescription, including how prescriptions will be transmitted from the originating pharmacy to the central fill pharmacy and how prepared prescriptions will be returned to the originating pharmacy or delivered to the patient;
 - How patient confidentiality and the privacy of patient health information will be maintained and meet the requirements of federal and provincial legislation;
 - How the central fill pharmacy will receive requests from the originating pharmacy and maintain records of such for the purposes of filing and record keeping;

¹ Health Canada has stated that, pursuant to subsection 45(1)(b) of the Narcotic Control Regulations, the sale/provision of narcotics or controlled substances from one pharmacy to another is allowed only in emergency situations. Section 55(1)(b)(ii) of the Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances Regulations also states that one pharmacist can sell/provide to another pharmacist if it is required because of a delay or shortfall in an order for the targeted substance placed with a licensed dealer. Pursuant to paragraph 24(2)(b) of the Narcotic Control Regulations and subparagraph 15(2)(c)(ii) of the Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances, a licensed dealer may sell or provide a narcotic, a controlled drug or a targeted substance to a pharmacist. Should a pharmacy become a licensed dealer, the pharmacy as a licensed dealer would then be able to sell or provide narcotics, controlled drugs and targeted substances to another pharmacist on the reception of a written order and provided all the requirements of the relevant regulations are met.

- How effective two-way communication between the pharmacies on pertinent patient and prescription issues will be maintained;
 - How prescriptions will be able to be tracked through the stages of the patient care and prescription preparation processes, including documentation of the pharmacist(s), pharmacy technician(s) and other pharmacy staff involved in the various stages of the process; and
 - A description of the quality assurance processes that will be implemented at each pharmacy to enable:
 - monitoring of the quality and integrity of the central fill program,
 - identification of opportunities to improve patient care, and
 - identification of issues that need to be reviewed and resolved.
- b) Once the pharmacy is authorized, prior to initiating central fill services, the central fill pharmacy must ensure the following requirements are met:
- i) *Written Agreement.* There must be a written agreement between the originating pharmacy and the central fill pharmacy, which outlines the services to be provided and the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of each pharmacy.
 - The agreement must be in compliance with federal and provincial legislation, the Standards of Pharmacy Operation, and Standards of Practice.
 - The agreement must be signed by the owners and pharmacists-in-charge of both the originating pharmacy and the central fill pharmacy. If the two pharmacies have common ownership, the agreement may take the form of a corporate policy.
 - A new agreement must be signed within seven days of any change in ownership or pharmacist-in-charge.
 - The agreement must be available to the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board upon request.
 - ii) *Policy and Procedure Manual.* The central fill pharmacy must provide the originating pharmacy with a copy of the policy and procedure manual developed in accordance with 2) a) ii).

3) Responsibilities of the Central Fill Pharmacy When Providing Central Fill Services

When providing central fill services, the central fill pharmacy is responsible for:

- a) ensuring that prescriptions are prepared in accordance with the requirements of federal and provincial legislation, the Standards of Pharmacy Operation, and Standards of Practice and the terms of the agreement with the originating pharmacy, including but not limited to, the accuracy of labelling, packaging, processing and record keeping of the drug product preparation;
- b) ensuring that, in addition to meeting the prescription labelling requirements set forth in the Standards of Pharmacy Operation, the prescription label also identifies that a central fill pharmacy was involved in preparing the prescription and includes the name of that pharmacy; and
- c) ensuring that prescription delivery takes place in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Standards of Pharmacy Operation. The central fill pharmacy is responsible for maintaining the safety and integrity of the drug product until received by the originating pharmacy. There must be an established process in place that gives assurance to the originating pharmacy of this integrity. In situations where the central fill pharmacy delivers the drug product directly to the patient or the patient's agent (e.g. long term care facilities), they are responsible for the safety and integrity of the drug product until it is received by the patient or agent.

4) Responsibilities of the Originating Pharmacy When Utilizing Central Fill Services

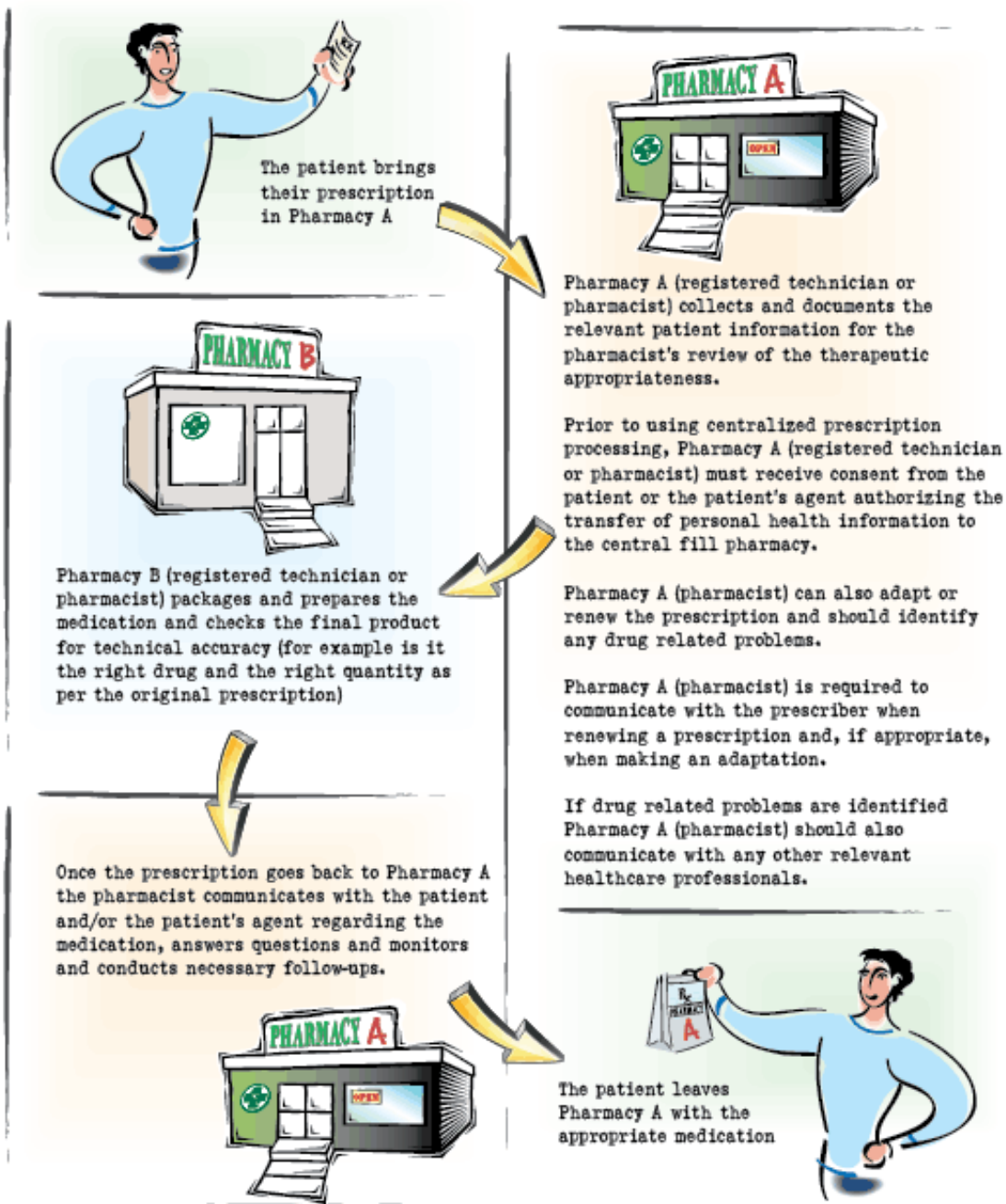
When utilizing central fill services, the originating pharmacy is responsible for:

- a) receiving the prescription from the patient or the patient's agent. All interactions with the patient, the patient's agent and prescribers are the responsibility of the originating pharmacy;
- b) ensuring that the patient or the patient's agent has provided informed consent to the fact that the prescription will be processed by a central fill pharmacy and that there will be transfer of personal health information. This consent must be appropriately documented and maintained by the originating pharmacy;
- c) meeting the requirements of federal and provincial legislation, the Standards of Pharmacy Operation, and Standards of Practice for all prescriptions, including but not limited to, collecting and documenting all relevant patient information, performing the patient assessment, reviewing all prescriptions for appropriateness, identifying and resolving drug therapy problems, providing all patient education and information and performing monitoring and follow-up;
- d) meeting the terms of the agreement with the central fill pharmacy, including but not limited to, prescription order entry and filing and storing of all documentation relating to the prescription and the patient for a minimum of ten years as per the record keeping requirements set forth in the Standards of Pharmacy Operation;
- e) ensuring there is a method of identifying which prescriptions were transmitted to the central fill pharmacy for processing. A copy of the prescription should be retained in the originating pharmacy; and
- f) maintaining the safety and integrity of the drug product from the time it is received from the central fill pharmacy until it is released to the patient.

5) References

- a) College of Pharmacists of Manitoba - [Central Fill Practice Direction](#)
- b) Ontario College of Pharmacists – [Policy - Centralized Prescription Processing \(Central Fill\)](#)
- c) Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals - [Policy Statement on Central Fill](#)

Example of Centralized Prescription Processing



* Pharmacy A may choose to provide interactions/services at different points than depicted in the diagram, and fewer or additional interactions/services as appropriate. The diagram illustrates the flow of a prescription in a centralized filling process as well as where cognitive and technical aspects of dispensing occur.