

# THE APOTHECARY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2025



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The official newsletter of the College of Pharmacy of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Registered pharmacy professionals are responsible for reviewing all information within this publication.

**f X in**  
@CollegePharmNL

*Welcome to the Fall 2025 edition of The Apothecary! Please read all of the content in this issue. If you have any questions or comments please email [inforx@cpnl.ca](mailto:inforx@cpnl.ca).*



## MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR

As a self-regulated profession, it is important that pharmacy professionals contribute to the regulatory process in the interest of developing standards that assist with providing quality safe care to the public. In our continued efforts to engage pharmacy professionals in the regulation of our profession, CPNL conducted two consultations in late summer and early fall. A draft of the Standards of Practice for Pharmacist-Ordered Laboratory Tests was available for review and pharmacy professionals, and other key partners, were invited to provide feedback through an online survey. More than 10% of all CPNL registered pharmacy professionals participated in the survey. For more on what we heard and how that feedback was used, please refer to the "Pharmacists-Ordered Laboratory Tests Standards of Practice" article on page 4. The finalized Standards are now available on our website at [cpnl.ca/professional-practice/area-of-practice/ordering-laboratory-tests](https://cpnl.ca/professional-practice/area-of-practice/ordering-laboratory-tests) for pharmacists to review prior to implementation. Pharmacy professionals were also invited to take part in a consultation on CPNL's Code of Ethics. This consultation was designed to inform the development of a new Code of Ethics. For more information on the outcome of this consultation, please refer to the "What We Heard: Your Perspective on a New Code of Ethics" article on page 5. On behalf of CPNL Board and staff, I sincerely thank everyone who participated in these consultations—you really make a difference!



As demonstrated by our increased consultation activities, engaging with pharmacy professionals is a priority for CPNL and is one of several engagement initiatives that support the [2023-2026 strategic goal](#) to strengthen pharmacy professionals' and the public's trust in the regulatory process. As part of this initiative, CPNL will be conducting a consultation in early 2026 to determine how pharmacy professionals prefer to receive information and engage with CPNL, and how CPNL's communications can further support optimal practice. Please provide your feedback so we can ensure that you receive critical regulatory and pharmacy practice information in an accessible and efficient manner.

CPNL is also focused on actively engaging with future pharmacy professionals to support early understanding of self-regulation and students' unique information needs. This fall, both the Deputy Registrar and I visited with the first-year pharmacy students at Memorial University's School of Pharmacy and pharmacy technician students at both Keyin College and the College of the North Atlantic. We were so pleased to welcome new people to the profession and were inspired by the energy and positivity students brought to our conversations. We wish all students success in their education and in becoming registered pharmacists or pharmacy technicians. With increasing workforce demands, new pharmacy professionals are vital to both the profession and the healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Fall is always a busy season for pharmacy professionals—thank you for all you do to assist the people in our province with their health and wellness needs, despite the ever-challenging practice environment. With that said, while looking after others, don't forget to look after yourself and engage in wellness and self-care activities. Please know that CPNL is committed to doing what we can to support you with this as we continue to identify and action ways we can help improve pharmacy practice environments to support pharmacy professionals in providing the public with the best possible care.

I wish you all the best the holiday season has to offer, and happiness, health, and success in the New Year.

Best Regards,

*Noelle Patten*



## IDENTIFYING WHO'S WHO IN THE PHARMACY

Most community pharmacies employ both regulated and non-regulated staff, each with distinct roles and responsibilities. This can include regulated staff members such as pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, students and interns, but also unregulated staff members such as assistants and clerks.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of members of the public who contact CPNL with questions or concerns about their pharmacy service but are unable to identify the person they were speaking with at the pharmacy. In fact, 91% of the members of the public that have contacted CPNL's complaints lines so far in 2025, could not name the pharmacy professional or individual they were reaching out about.

In some circumstances, not knowing the identity or role of the member of the pharmacy team can create significant issues for members of the public, some of which have resulted with them filing complaints against the relevant pharmacy professional or against the pharmacist-in-charge. For instance, members of the public have reported:

- accepting "advice" from an unregulated staff member, believing them to be the pharmacist on duty;
- being confused as to the name and role of individuals they are speaking with and not knowing whether they are interacting with the right person to address their questions;
- experiencing issues with confidentiality;
- interacting with staff members who refuse to provide their names; and
- interacting with non-regulated staff members who refer to themselves as "technicians".

Section 1.2 (d) of the [Standards of Pharmacy Operation – Community Pharmacies](#) requires all pharmacy staff to wear a suitable name tag that identifies to the public that person's **name and staff position**. It goes on to state that registered pharmacy staff – including pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, all students and interns – must be identified by their **full name**.

When meeting this requirement, pharmacy owners, pharmacists-in-charge, and staff members should consider the reasons behind this requirement and the importance of it to members of the public.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Identifying the person's staff position shows the public that there are different levels of responsibility within the pharmacy and helps them to identify who is responsible for the technical aspects of dispensing versus the clinical roles.

### PROFESSIONALISM

Having easily and professionally identifiable staff members projects an image of professionalism and competence to the public and builds trust with patients, which is crucial for a healthcare setting.

### PATIENT SAFETY AND PRIVACY

Clear identification reduces confusion for members of the public and helps patients ensure that they are directing their questions to the appropriate person and not unintentionally disclosing personal health information to someone they did not intend to.

To ensure that this requirement is consistently applied for both new staff members and staff who may only be with the pharmacy temporarily, such as students and interns, pharmacies should develop and enforce a clear, written policy regarding staff identification. Such a policy should include information related to the appearance of the tags, the details required on the tag, and how new or replacement tags can be acquired. Pharmacists-in-charge should also ensure that all staff members are educated on the policy and understand the importance of wearing their name tags at all times while in the pharmacy.



## PHARMACIST-ORDERED LABORATORY TESTS STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Over the past several years, the College of Pharmacy of Newfoundland and Labrador (CPNL) has been working with the Department of Health and Community Services on the development of regulations enabling pharmacists to utilize their full scope of practice in relation to ordering laboratory tests. Following amendments to the [Pharmacy Regulations, 2024](#) on August 14, 2025 to include these regulations, CPNL provided pharmacy professionals with an opportunity to provide input into the development of accompanying Standards of Practice.

This consultation took place over four weeks from August 15–September 14, 2025, and resulted in 156 responses.

Most of the respondents indicated that they practice in community pharmacy (71%), followed by hospital (24%) and then 5% from academia, administration, or other.

Many pharmacy professionals expressed appreciation that this practice area was being enabled; while some expressed challenges with integration of another practice into existing workflows, role expansion amid

workforce shortages and workplace pressures, and workload impacts of receiving and responding to critical test results. In response to these concerns, CPNL encourages pharmacists to assess their capacity to participate in the practice before becoming authorized and pharmacists-in-charge should have a plan in place for integrating the practice before offering it to patients.

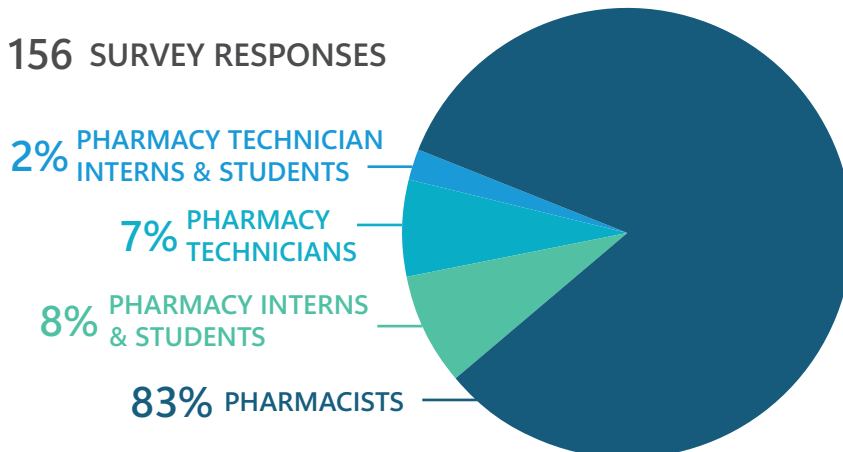
Additional concerns were raised regarding knowledge gaps in how to use the laboratory tests formulary when making decisions, how to access the results, and how to assess and respond to test results including what actions are within scope and when referral would be required. This was really important feedback for CPNL and these concerns were brought to the attention of those developing the required education course for authorization, to be integrated into the curriculum.

Following a comprehensive review of the survey feedback and consultation with the CPNL Pharmacy Practice Advisory Committee, the board reviewed and approved a final version of the Standards of Practice at their October 17, 2025 meeting. The final version of the standards is now available on the CPNL website at: [cpnl.ca/professional-practice/area-of-practice/ordering-laboratory-tests/](https://cpnl.ca/professional-practice/area-of-practice/ordering-laboratory-tests/).

As per the *Pharmacy Regulations, 2024* and the Standards of Practice, pharmacists must complete approved education and receive authorization from CPNL prior to ordering laboratory tests. An education program is currently being developed, as are authorization forms and policies. More information will be posted to the CPNL website and communicated to pharmacy professionals upon completion. It is anticipated that education and authorization will be available for pharmacists by January 2026.

If you have questions about the regulations or standards of practice, please contact CPNL at [practicequestions@cpnl.ca](mailto:practicequestions@cpnl.ca).

### 156 SURVEY RESPONSES



## WHAT WE HEARD: YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON A NEW CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics Project has concluded its comprehensive needs assessment in preparation for creating a new Code of Ethics for the pharmacy profession in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). During this phase, evidence from peer reviewed and grey literature was synthesized, press articles were reviewed and evidence was created from local NL key partners including pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, students and interns and educators.

We heard from 64 pharmacy professionals in response to an online questionnaire.

Most of the respondents indicated that they practice in community pharmacy (62%), followed by hospital (26%) and then 12% from other.

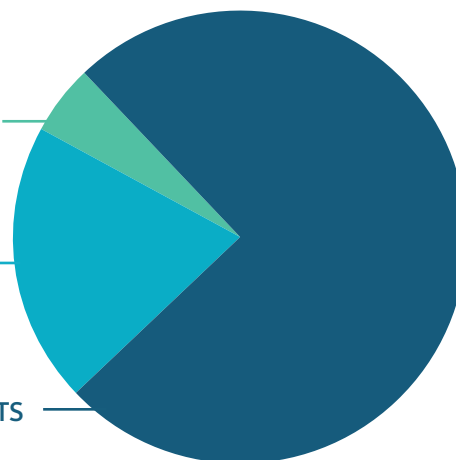
In terms of diversity, respondents were evenly distributed in terms of age and years in practice. There was some representation from professionals who identified as part of the 2SLGBTQIA++ community (6%), North American Indigenous population (11%), and persons with disabilities (6%). Most participants indicated English as their first language (98%). Over 75% of respondents were female.

### 64 SURVEY RESPONSES

5% INTERNS & STUDENTS

20% PHARMACY  
TECHNICIANS

75% PHARMACISTS



Registered pharmacy professionals identified the following priorities for the new Code of Ethics:

- **PRIMARY AUDIENCE:** Most respondents indicated the primary audience for the Code of Ethics should be pharmacy professionals, with many rural professionals also placing similar priority on the public.
- **PRIMARY FUNCTION:** Functions of the Code of Ethics related to 'duty' were most frequently selected as vital. Respondents indicated that the Code of Ethics should describe ethical duties of a pharmacy professional and should express the sense of duty a professional has to members of the public.
- **ETHICAL ISSUES TO ADDRESS:** The most highly rated ethical issues that the Code of Ethics should address include:
  - Conflict of interest between business and patient care priorities
  - Collective ethical principles such as solidarity, utility, stewardship and sustainability
  - Conscientious objection
  - Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA)
  - Unconscious bias
- **ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING TOOL:** Most respondents indicated that including a systematic approach for making ethical decisions would be useful in a Code of Ethics.

### NEXT STEPS

Drafting of the Code of Ethics will begin this month and is forecast to conclude in the first quarter of 2026. NL pharmacy professionals as well as other key partners will have an opportunity to provide detailed feedback and perspective on the final draft Code of Ethics in the coming months. Given the gravity and substance of the Code of Ethics to the pharmacy profession and the public it serves, it is vital to ensure your voice is included at this next and final opportunity for input.







## Thoughtful Conversations about Community Pharmacists Screening for Social Determinants of Health

### About

The **SPARK RPh Public Engagement Project** is an initiative led by a team at MUN School of Pharmacy in collaboration with CPNL (principal partner), patient partners, the Upstream Lab, and NLCAHR.

The project aligns with the growing primary care movement to improve the health of the population by taking action on social determinants of health (SDH) and reducing inequities in health outcomes.

The project consists of two parts: (1) public engagement; and (2) knowledge translation and exchange (KTE). Findings from the engagement sessions are discussed here. Stay tuned for the next Apothecary article focused on KTE outcomes.

### Approach

We hosted a total of 5 virtual engagement sessions with 4 key informant groups in NL. A plain-language evidence brief was circulated in advance of each session. Qualitative data analysis followed the Rigorous and Accelerated Data Reduction technique. Concepts and themes were developed using an inductive, team-based approach.



#### Citizens

Two engagement sessions with 11 citizens from diverse backgrounds & experiences.



#### Community Groups

One engagement session with individuals from 3 community organizations.



#### Pharmacists

One engagement session with 5 pharmacists from diverse pharmacies in NL.



#### Pharmacy Students

One engagement session with 9 students in years 3+ of pharmacy studies at MUN.

**This project was supported by the Memorial University Public Engagement Accelerator Fund**



## CITIZENS

## WHAT WE HEARD

The accessibility of community pharmacists was viewed positively and with great potential to tackle SDH. Communication and collaboration were identified as important roles for pharmacists in addressing social needs. However, many **citizens** acknowledged that social conditioning may negatively impact public acceptance and/or uptake. Expansions to the provincial MyHealthNL infrastructure to allow for self-reporting of SDH, as well as data collection by pharmacists, were suggested. Inclusive, respectful, trauma and disability informed approaches to care were identified as necessary strategies to move this initiative forward.



## COMMUNITY GROUPS

The demand for social supports (housing, food, transportation, etc.) in communities throughout the province is growing. The public-facing role and accessibility of pharmacists was identified as an important way to reach and support individuals in need. The collection of social needs data by pharmacists would help the advocacy efforts of **community groups**. The **2-1-1** information and referral service was identified as a valuable tool to support pharmacists in their efforts to connect patients with social care. Clear public communication about the role of pharmacists in supporting patients with social needs was identified as crucial, particularly if pharmacists are to move forward with screening or referrals.



## PHARMACISTS

A significant need for action on SDH within the community setting was identified by **pharmacists**. Each pharmacist described ways they support patients with social needs, such as addressing the affordability of medication and supplies. However, it was acknowledged that social needs are dynamic and fluid and therefore, pharmacists alone cannot carry the weight of SDH screening within the health system. Rather, a more holistic, multidisciplinary approach to health and social care is needed. Several barriers to implementation of SDH screening were identified, prompting the need for further exploration of supports & solutions.



## STUDENTS

There was recognition that while **students** learn about SDH, they often feel unprepared to act in real-life situations. They advocated for more opportunities to engage with individuals with lived/living experience in the classroom. That being said, their experiences in the pharmacy setting were described as eye-opening and transformative. Many students gave examples of how their preceptor or another pharmacist spent time finding lower cost medications, completing insurance paperwork for medication coverage, and providing medication deliveries. Students also discussed the challenge associated with reconciling expectations and reality. Burnout, staffing shortages, and patient expectations were identified as potential barriers to uptake.



For more info **CONTACT:**  
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## BOARD MEETING UPDATE

Since the last issue of *The Apothecary*, the CPNL Board of Directors (Board) met on July 25 and October 17, 2025.

During these meetings, the Board:

- Received an update on operations, financial management, progress with strategic goals and initiatives, and the working conditions and wellness action plan from the Registrar & CEO.
- Approved the 2026 Schedule of Fees and 2026 Operational Budget and revisions to two financial policies –*General Finance Operations Policy* and *Reserve Funds Policy*.
- Approved revisions to the *CPNL Bylaws*.
- Approved the *Pharmacist-Ordered Laboratory Tests Standards of Practice*.
- Approved the *Registration as a Pharmacy Technician – Internationally Educated Pharmacy Technicians Registration Policy* and the *Practical Training Requirements for Registration as a Pharmacy Technician – Internationally Educated Pharmacy Technician Applicants Interpretation Guide*.

## 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2025 Annual General Meeting took place on July 25, 2025.

During this meetings, the Board:

- Received highlights of the 2024 Annual Report from the Registrar & CEO.
- Appointed the Auditor for 2025 Financial Statements.
- Announced the results of the 2025 Board election:
  - Zone 2 Pharmacist – Jason Ryan
  - Zone 3 Pharmacist – Melissa Key
- Recognized the contribution of outgoing board member, Jennifer Godsell.

## NEW BOARD MEMBER

In addition to the members elected in the 2025 Board election, who were introduced in the [June 2025 \(Issue #111\) of The Postscript](#), the CPNL Board of Directors welcomed a new Government-Appointed Public Representative to the Board. Their first regular board meeting was October 17, 2025.



### KAREN MERCER

#### GOVERNMENT-APPOINTED PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE

Karen Mercer is a retired nurse, who worked in the health care system for 35 years, 30 of which were spent at Carbonear General Hospital in nursing administration.

Karen has been a member of Bay Robert's Tourism Committee for several years and was a trustee with the Avalon West School Board before it was replaced by the NL School Board.

She looks forward to using her experience and insight to support CPNL in governing the practice of pharmacy in the public interest.





## BOARD MEMBERS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**CHAIR**

Jason Ryan

**VICE CHAIR**

Shawn Bugden

**EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

Bree Aucoin

Andrew Sweetapple

## PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

**BOARD-APPOINTED**

Terry Foss

Mark Sheppard

**GOVERNMENT-APPOINTED**

Karen Mercer

Mary O'Brien

## NON-VOTING

**REGISTRAR**

Noelle Patten

## ELECTED MEMBERS

**ZONE 1 PHARMACIST**

Stephen Coombs

**ZONE 2 PHARMACIST**

Jason Ryan

**ZONE 3 PHARMACIST**

Melissa Key

**ZONE 4 PHARMACIST**

Bree Aucoin

**ZONE 5 HOSPITAL PHARMACIST**

Justin Peddle

**ZONE 6 PHARMACY TECHNICIAN**

Jeanie Hinks

**ZONE 7 AT-LARGE PHARMACISTS**

Andrew Sweetapple

Currently Vacant

DEAN, MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

Shawn Bugden



The official newsletter of  
the College of Pharmacy of  
Newfoundland and Labrador.

Registered pharmacy  
professionals are responsible  
for reviewing all information  
within this publication.

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Pharmacy Licensing	<a href="mailto:licensing@cpnl.ca">licensing@cpnl.ca</a>
Quality Assurance	<a href="mailto:QA@cpnl.ca">QA@cpnl.ca</a>
Pharmacy Practice	<a href="mailto:practicequestions@cpnl.ca">practicequestions@cpnl.ca</a>
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