



College of Pharmacists of Manitoba

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Practice Direction Termination of Relationship with Patient

1.0 Scope and Objective:

1.1 Expected Outcome

This document is a practice direction of Council concerning the implementation of the principle of terminating a relationship with a patient by a licensed pharmacist through the authority of The Pharmaceutical Regulations to *The Pharmaceutical Act* and *The Pharmaceutical Act (Act)*.

1.2 Document Jurisdiction (Area of Practice)

Compliance is expected from all licensed pharmacists in Manitoba practice.

1.3 Regulatory Authority Reference

Section 56 of the Pharmaceutical Regulation under *The Pharmaceutical Act* allows Council to create this practice direction.

2.0 Practice Direction

Definitions

2.1 “Pharmacist/Patient relationship” means either

- a relationship between a patient and an individual pharmacist within a practice site; or
- a relationship between a patient and all pharmacists within the same practice site

Termination of patient relationship by the licenced pharmacist

2.2 A licenced pharmacist must carefully consider any decision to discontinue care and use reasonable efforts to resolve any issues affecting the relationship with the patient prior to any final decision to terminating the relationship. If a licenced pharmacist is uncertain whether or not it is professionally acceptable to end a pharmacist-patient relationship, they are advised to seek additional professional advice.

- Reasonable efforts include discussing with the patient, when possible, the reasons affecting the pharmacist's ability to provide quality care and/or the elements that are necessary for an effective pharmacist-patient relationship
- Pharmacists shall consider the *Manitoba Human Rights Code* and the Code of Ethics prior to terminating a relationship with a patient

2.3 A licenced pharmacist who terminates a relationship with a patient must:

- consult with their pharmacy manager prior to terminating the patient relationship and ensure a plan exists for care of the patient if the patient continues to have a relationship with the pharmacy
- have reasonable grounds for doing so and document those reasons on the patient record
 - Reasonable grounds may include, but is not limited to, a breakdown of trust and respect where there has been patient fraud or a communication breakdown
- give the patient advance written notice and, where appropriate and feasible, verbal notice, of the intention to terminate care and sufficient notice commensurate with the continuing care needs of the patient, but no less than 7 days' notice
 - Some situations (such as where there is a genuine risk of serious harm in the opinion of the licensed pharmacist) may warrant written communication only.
- advise the patient of the reasons for termination of the pharmacist-patient relationship in the above verbal and written notice
- ensure the verbal communication of the decision to discontinue professional services is done in a manner which is as clear as possible and safeguards the patient's privacy
- ensure a written notice of the intention to discontinue professional services is signed by the pharmacy manager and a copy is retained by the pharmacy
- advise the staff of the pharmacy and other appropriate staff, on a need-to-know basis, that the pharmacist/patient relationship has been terminated
- If deemed necessary by the licensed pharmacist(s), they may notify the patient's physician or other care providers that the pharmacist/patient relationship has been terminated
- provide pharmacy services to the patient in the interim until the transfer of care is completed.

2.4 Notwithstanding 2.3 above, a licenced pharmacist may terminate a relationship with a patient without providing advance notice, and shall consult with their

pharmacy manager at the earliest opportunity either before or after terminating that relationship, if:

- the patient poses a risk to the licenced pharmacist, pharmacy staff, or other patients; or
- the patient fails to respect professional boundaries; or
- the licenced pharmacist is leaving the practice location and another licenced pharmacist will assume the practice in the same location; or
- the licenced pharmacist is discontinuing practice at a particular practice site and the patient's care will be provided by another pharmacist on staff.

2.5 Notwithstanding 2.3 above, a licenced pharmacist may terminate a relationship with a patient without advising the patient in the above verbal and written notice of the reasons for termination of the pharmacist-patient relationship if disclosure of the reasons could be expected to:

- result in immediate and grave harm to the patient's mental or physical health or safety; or
- threaten the mental health and physical health or safety of another individual; or
- pose a threat to public safety

2.6 If the licensed pharmacist believes that there may be a risk of serious harm after termination of the patient relationship they may, in accordance with relevant privacy legislation such as the *Personal Health Information Act*:

- disclose the minimal amount of information necessary to any individual or agency (e.g. police, Child and Family Services) necessary to prevent or lessen serious harm to the patient, pharmacist, or another individual, or to public health or safety

3.0 Compliance Adjudication

3.1 All documentation must be readily accessible and open to regulatory review.

4.0 Appendices

Not applicable

A Practice Direction is a written statement made by Council for the purposes of giving direction to members and owners about the conduct of their practice or pharmacy operations. Compliance with practice directions is required under the Pharmaceutical Act.

The process for development, consultation, implementation, appeal and review is published on the College website.

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