



Welcome to Fireside Chat # 287

June 21, 2012 1:00 – 2:00 PM Eastern Time

# Policy Analysis of Scope of Practice Changes for Pharmacists and Optometrists and Regulation of Pharmacy Technicians

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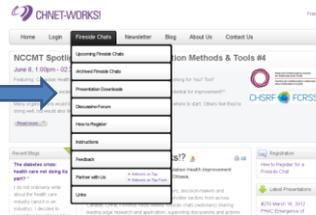
A project of  
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***Difficulties? Firewalls or Slow Speed***

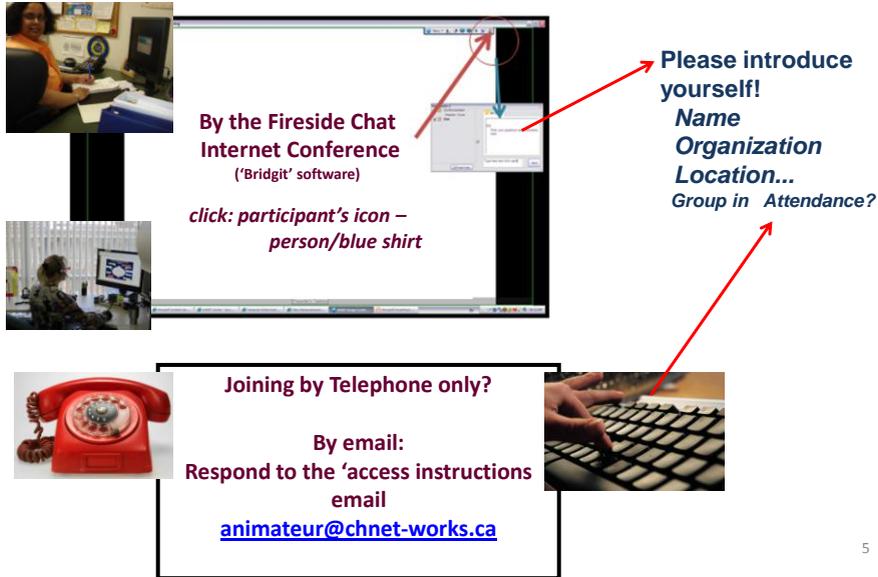
***slow reception  
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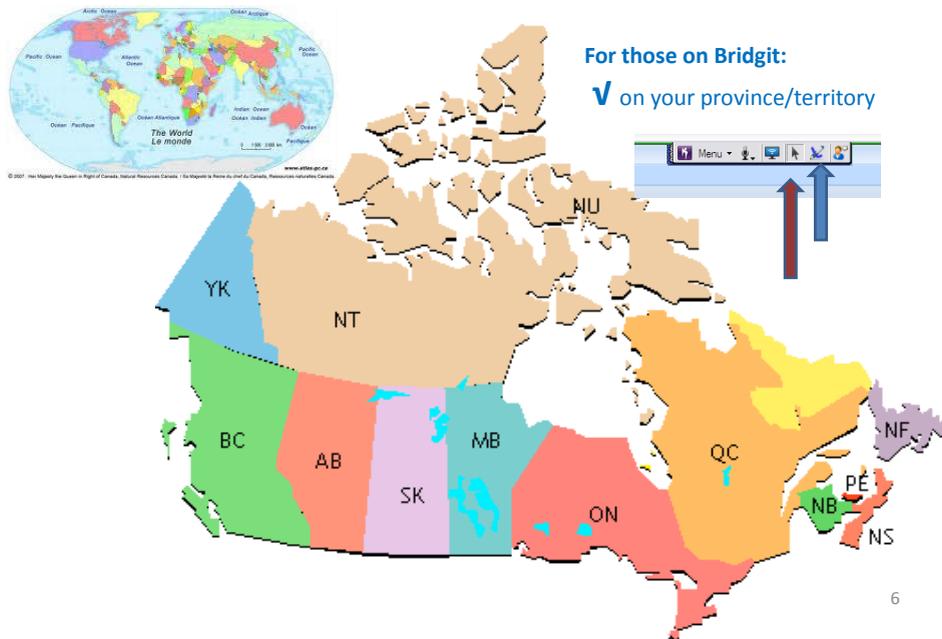
**Please introduce yourself!**  
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## Where are you located?



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## Scope of practice policy analysis

- Pharmacists
- Pharmacy Technicians
- Optometrists

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## Acknowledgements

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  - Drug Safety and Effectiveness Cross-Disciplinary Training Fellowship

## What is your background?

Pharmacy	Pharmacy Technician	Optometry
Academia	Government	Other

## Introduction

- A number of scope of practice changes are taking place
  - Bill 171 An Act to improve health systems by amending or repealing various enactments and enacting several Acts (2007)
  - Bill 179 An Act to amend various acts related to regulated health professionals and other certain other Acts
- **Purpose:**
- To examine the scope of practice changes from educational, regulatory, practice and systems of professions perspectives:
- Case studies:
  - Pharmacy
  - Pharmacy technician
  - Optometry

## Questions

### Educational

- Program development
- Continuing education

### Regulatory

- Role of the colleges
- Regulatory issues

### System of Professions

- Interprofessional collaboration
- Overlapping scope of practice

### Practice

- Daily activities
- Quality of services offered to the public

## Methods

- Document analysis
- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups
- Survey
- Stakeholder roundtable

# Pharmacists

## Medication Therapy

- Expanded mandate for pharmacy practice in Ontario to include
  - “the promotion of health, prevention and treatment of disease, disorders and dysfunctions through monitoring and management of medication therapy”.
- The bill formalized the pharmacists’ ability to adapt, modify, and extend existing prescriptions.
- The bill also granted pharmacists the authority to perform controlled acts including prescribing and administering substances by inhalation and via injection.

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## Education



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## Regulatory

- Compared to other professions who have prescribing privileges, pharmacists in Ontario are expected to receive very limited access to initiation of therapy.
- The tasks of adapting or extending prescriptions are extended to all medications (except narcotics)
  - seems to pharmacists an extension of their current role and provides improved efficiency in the system to be allowed to do such tasks.



## System of professions

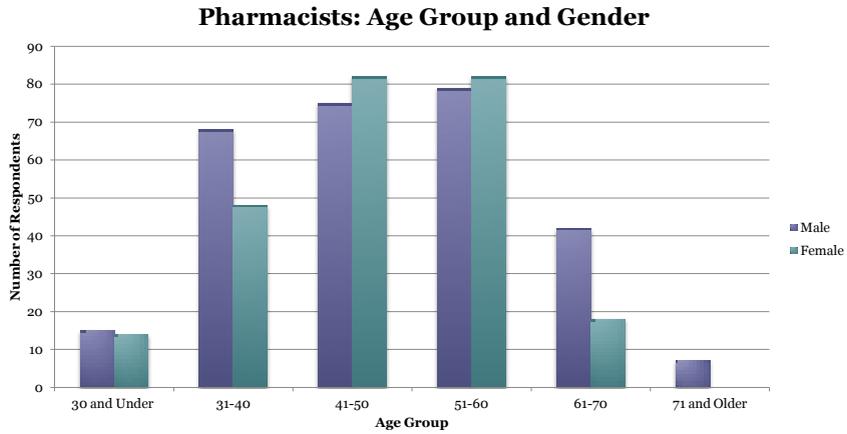
- The role of pharmacists:
  - patient assessment
  - determination of any safety risks
  - patient education
- Interprofessional communication
  - pharmacists  $\leftrightarrow$  physicians
  - pharmacists  $\leftrightarrow$  pharmacy technicians



## Practice Level

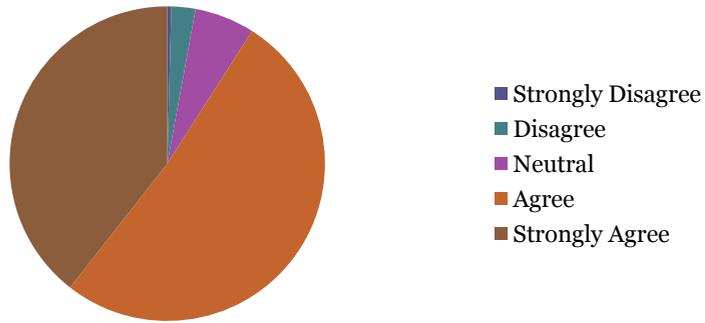
- Agreement that pharmacists need to be able to make decisions on medication management to improve health system efficiency and safety monitoring.
- More challenging in community settings.
  - Logistical issues
  - Access to patient files
  - Interdisciplinary support
- The regulation of pharmacy technicians will likely enhance the pharmacist's ability to move into this role but setting constraints still exist.

## Pharmacy Survey responses

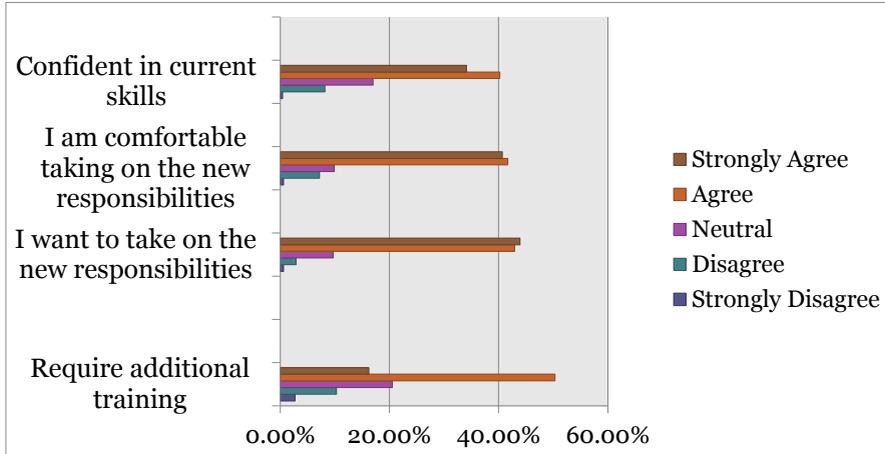


## Patient Safety

**Responsibilities for patient safety will increase as a result of the expanded scope of practice.**

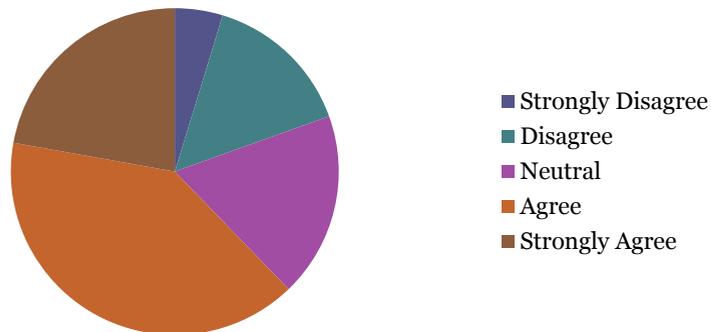


## Skills and practice



## Different settings

**Different prescribing rights should be given to pharmacists in different practice settings in order to ensure patient safety.**

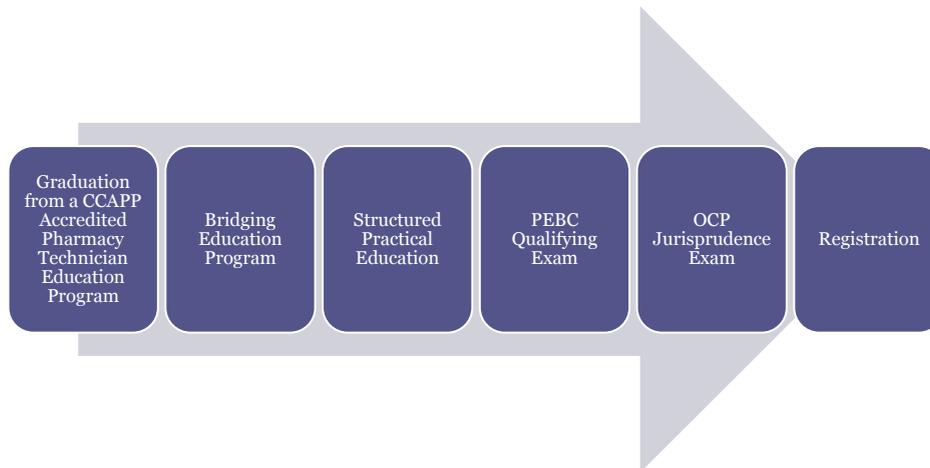


# Pharmacy technicians

## Regulated Health Profession

- Pharmacy Technicians officially became recognized as a new class of registrant with the Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP)
  - The term “pharmacy technician” is now a protected title and refers only to registered pharmacy technicians.
  - All non-registered persons are referred to as pharmacy assistants.

## Education



## Regulatory

- Regulation of pharmacy technicians
  - partly to allow pharmacists to practice to the full scope of their skills
  - partly to ensure patient safety by ensuring a basic standard of education and responsibility among pharmacy technicians



## System of Professions

- Regulation is thought better for patient safety
- Regulation seems better for working together when all parties understand the roles and educational standards
- Dynamics between pharmacists and registered pharmacy technicians as yet unclear
  - Community
  - Hospitals

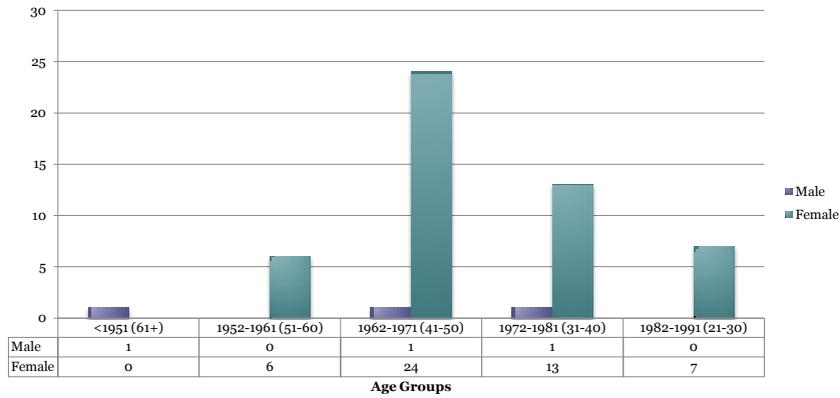


## Practice

- Hospital pharmacy technicians were practicing under expanded scope via delegation
- Community pharmacy technicians concerns:
  - financial support to become registered
  - compensation
  - job security
- Interprofessional dynamics is as yet undetermined and considered integral to facilitation of the new roles

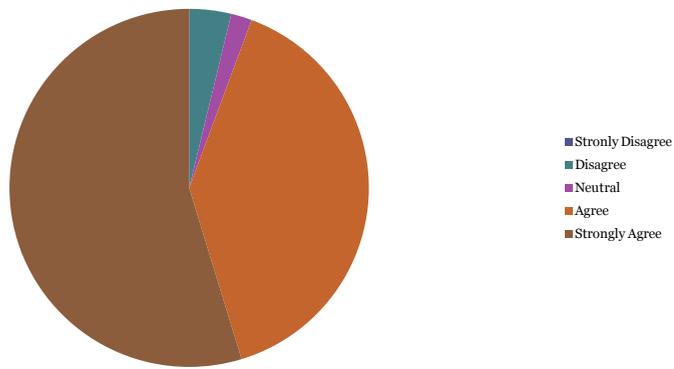
## Pharmacy Tech Survey responses

**Pharmacy Technicians: Age and Gender**



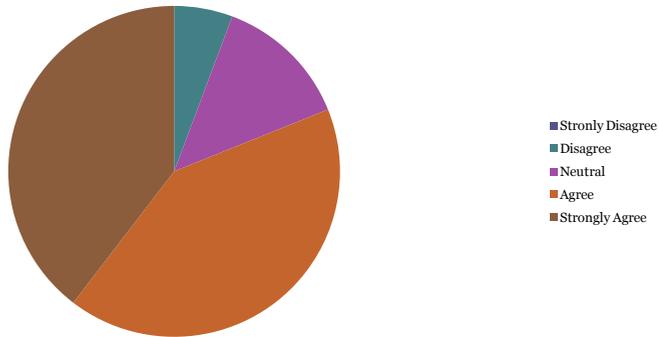
## Pharm technician regulatory changes

**The regulatory changes are a positive step towards the advancement of the profession.**



## Pharmacy technician education

**Pharmacy technicians require additional training to be able to become registered with the Ontario College of Pharmacists.**



Optometrists



## Prescribing

- Ontario Optometrists
  - authorized to conduct comprehensive oculo-visual assessments and to prescribe and dispense eyewear.
  - diagnose and treat diseases and disorders of the eye and visual system, including prescribing drugs designated in the regulations.



## Education

- The optometric curricula must meet the requirements of the ACOE to retain institutional degree accreditation.
  - The curriculum has been developing since the 1990s in order to prepare for the expanded scope.
- **Previously trained:**
  - 100-hour approved course in the treatment and management of ocular disease
  - This includes passing a transcript-quality examination at the end of the program or passing the therapeutics portion of the Canadian or US board certification examination.



## Regulatory

- Optometrists are generally very pleased with the granting of prescribing privileges
- The main issue with the regulations is the list that specifies the names of drugs on the formulary.
  - Categories are considered to be more adaptable and able to keep up with rapidly changing drug research and availability.



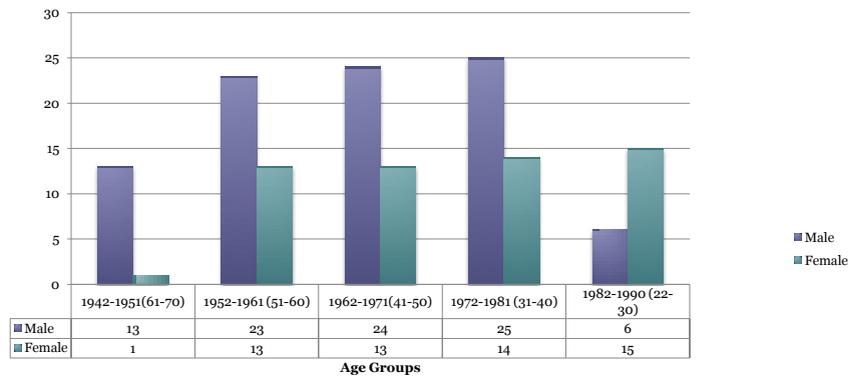
## System of Professions

- Interprofessional collaboration is encouraged but:
  - hindered by the physical separation of optometrists from other health care providers.
  - uncertainty as to how prescribing by optometrists will be received by ophthalmologists.
  - a good professional relationship between the two as well as with family practitioners and other specialists is acknowledged to be very important.

## Practice

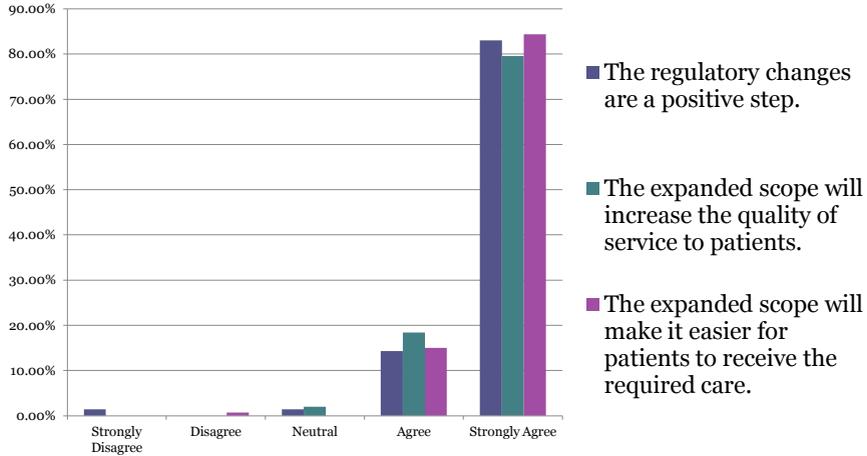
- Patients may not yet be aware of regulatory changes
- From our data, the main issue is with billing codes.
  - While additional remuneration for prescribing privileges is a topic of concern, it seems that existing billing codes and instructions are also inadequate, inefficient and confusing for both optometrists and the public.
  - Numerous advances can be made in this area to clarify insured services and improve system efficiency.

## Optometrist responses



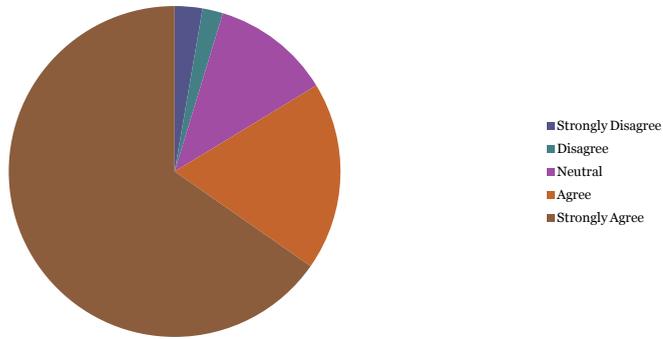
**Optometrists: Age and Gender**

## Optometry regulatory changes



## Drugs

**Drugs specified under optometrists' controlled act should be specified by drug category or class rather than by specific lists of drug names.**



## Summary

- Regulations should be Principle-based rather than Transactional-based.
- Regulations should maximize clarity and understanding not only for the affected professional group but also for those collaborating and sharing controlled acts with that group as well as for patients.
- Interprofessional collaboration was identified as an issue for all professions, all of whom are making conscious strides in this area.
- Individual providers and professions as a whole need to be able to communicate easily and to access patients' medical records.

Thank you