



Patient & Family Guide
2026

Hospital Pharmacy Services

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www.nshealth.ca

Hospital Pharmacy Services

Hospital Pharmacy Services team members are important members of your health care team.

They include:

- › Pharmacists
- › Regulated pharmacy technicians
- › Pharmacy practice assistants

Our team members work directly with you to help with your health needs. We:

- › Teach you about your medication
- › Offer care to help you reach your personal health goals

What pharmacy services are available?

Medication preparation

- We work hard to get your medication ready safely, in the correct dose (amount) and on time.

Medication history

- We work with you and your support persons to get a full list of all the medications you use at home.

Medication management

Pharmacists will:

- Work with you to understand what you hope your medication will help you with
- Work with your health care team to make sure medication is the best choice for you
- Work with your health care team to make sure you are given the correct dose of your medication at the correct time
- Make sure your medication is safe for you
- Work with you to manage drug interactions (when a medication causes problems because it reacts to another medication you are taking)
- Work with you to manage any side effects of your medication

Regulated pharmacy technicians will:

- Help you learn how to use medication devices (like inhalers and blood sugar monitors)
- Give vaccine injections when prescribed by your health care team
- Check your medication before you are discharged to support your transition home (like checking your pass medication or self-medications)

Prescribing medications

Pharmacists can:

- Continue any prescriptions you had before you were admitted to the hospital, so that you will not miss any doses
- Prescribe your medication when you are discharged
 - › This includes any new medication you started taking during your hospital stay
- Prescribe medication to treat minor problems (like cold sores and allergies)
- Prescribe medication to help manage newly diagnosed or chronic (ongoing) conditions (like diabetes or high blood pressure)
- Prescribe preventative medication (like vaccines or cholesterol-lowering medications)

Medication teaching

Pharmacists can answer any questions you have about your medication. They can help you learn:

- › Why you need a medication
- › How your medication works
- › How to take your medication
- › What to expect when you take your medication

- Pharmacists can also give you a **medication calendar**. This is a tool to help you take your medication. It has information like:
 - › The name of your medication
 - › The reasons you are taking the medication
 - › What time of day to take your medication
 - › Any special instructions for your medication (like taking them with food)
- Pharmacists make sure you are offered medications that are easy for you to take and follow. They also work with your health care team and your insurance plan to find the most affordable medication.
- Before you leave the hospital, the pharmacist will help you learn about your medication so that you feel confident taking it at home.
- The hospital pharmacist will work with your community pharmacy to make sure all of your medication needs will be met after you leave the hospital.

Promoting health

Pharmacists promote health by:

- Prescribing and giving vaccines
 - › They learn about which vaccines you have had in the past and find out what vaccine is right for you.

- Helping you to cut down on or stop smoking
 - › They will talk with you about other healthy lifestyle choices.

Learning, teaching, and research

- The pharmacy team is dedicated to lifelong learning.
- Pharmacists are leaders in the hospital. They take part in teaching and working with other pharmacists, pharmacy students, pharmacy residents, and other members of the health care team.
- Pharmacists want to make sure the best possible medication options are available to you. They take part in research that focuses on providing the best care.

Medication information and review

- When pharmacists are deciding which medication to offer you, they look at:
 - › How to use or take the medication
 - › How safe the medication is for you
 - › How well the medication will treat your condition
 - › How much the medication costs

- They also share this information with the other members of your health care team to make sure you get the right medication and dose.

If you would like to see a pharmacist at any time during your hospital stay, please tell a member of your health care team.

Resources

Visit these websites to learn more about what pharmacists do in hospitals and in the community:

The Value of Hospital Pharmacists – Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia

› <https://vimeo.com/50772422>

Canadian Society of Healthcare-Systems Pharmacy

› www.cshp.ca

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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