

TECH talk

MARCH 2014

CAPT gears up for PDC

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF

Pharmacy Technicians (CAPT) has an exciting and informative program in store for this year's National Professional Development Conference (PDC). "It offers pharmacy technicians a chance to explore different scopes of practice, new techniques and new opportunities in the profession," says Mary Bozoian, CAPT president.

This year's PDC will take place May 2-4 at Hilton Hotel & Suites, Niagara Falls, Ont., overlooking the awe-inspiring American and Canadian Horseshoe Falls.

The event will begin with a bang on Friday night, with a welcome reception and fireworks show. The next two days will feature sessions on scope of practice, compounding, drugs and pregnancy, and more. Also on the agenda are a professional update, a technician panel, and a presentation of the highlights of the latest Pharmacy Technician Trends & Insights survey, sponsored by *Pharmacy Practice+*.

Delegates will also have a chance to network with conference exhibitors and celebrate with their colleagues at a gala dinner at Brasa Restaurant on Saturday evening.

For more information, and to register, visit www.capt.ca.

NAPRA bridging program enters second semester

JANUARY 2014 USHERED IN THE second semester of the National Pharmacy Technician Bridging Education Program. The National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) launched the program in September 2013 for those

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TECH THRIVES AFTER REGULATION



ASHLEY CHEUNG WAS RESEARCHING

a continuing education (CE) requirement on the website of the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia last year when a job posting caught her eye. The College was seeking a regulated technician to fill the position of coordinator, inspections and professional development.

At the time, Cheung was working as operations manager at a long-term-care pharmacy that serviced nursing facilities and mental health initiatives in Vancouver. Having spent most of her career in that field, "I was ready to try something new," she says. With her background as an operations manager and her RhPT designation, she was an ideal candidate for the College position, which she assumed in June 2013.

In that capacity, she oversees two departments: professional development and inspections. For the professional development component, she monitors the CE requirements of all registrants, including pharmacists and technicians. The department also administers a knowledge assessment exam for return-to-practice applicants. For the inspections arm, she is helping the director develop a practice review program for the inspectors (compliance officers) who review pharmacists and technicians in their practice setting. "On top of that, we are also the staff resource for three committees," she adds. It's a heavy workload, but one on which she thrives.

"Ashley is a very valued member of our team," says Mykle Ludvigsen, director, public accountability and engagement, for the College. "She's a huge asset to this organization."

With two departments to manage, Cheung

says her greatest challenge is, not surprisingly, multitasking and prioritizing. But the demands of the job are far outweighed by the rewards—most notably the opportunity to connect with other pharmacy healthcare professionals. "Because they are from different practices, I am learning a lot from them," she says.

Cheung's main goal, at the moment, is to complete the development of the practice review program and oversee its rollout. Eventually, she may be interested in becoming a compliance officer herself.

Whatever direction her career takes, it will be enriched by the opportunities afforded to her as a registered pharmacy technician. Cheung is grateful to her former employer for encouraging all the assistants to become regulated. She completed the National Pharmacy Technician Bridging Education Program at the University of British Columbia, becoming regulated in June 2012. Cheung says the RPhT designation opened doors to her current and former positions, both of which required a regulated technician. "I always encourage other technicians to get regulated," she says. "I strongly believe that we should go down this road."

BY THE NUMBERS

The technician tally continues to climb. The first three provinces to implement regulation have recorded dramatic increases year over year; meanwhile, Nova Scotia has registered its first technician.

2012

Alberta – 32
British Columbia – 47
Ontario – 425

2013

Alberta – 115
British Columbia – 290
Ontario – 1,023

2014 (as of February)

Alberta – 257
British Columbia – 618
Nova Scotia – 1
Ontario – 1,908

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NEWS

Manitoba ready for regulation

WITH THE PROCLAMATION OF ITS new
Pharmaceutical Act on January 1, 2014, the
College of Pharmacists of Manitoba (www.cphm.ca) is set to proceed with the regulation
of pharmacy technicians.

The College still has to establish a jurispru-
dence exam and develop a structured practi-
cal training program, explains registrar
Ronald Guse. However, "the critical event
clearly is for the individual to successfully
complete the PEBC [Pharmacy Examining
Board of Canada] Qualifying Examination," he
says. "Right now, Manitoba isn't a site for that
exam. I hope that we'll become a site once
PEBC sees there is sufficient interest." He
notes that PEBC has previously conducted
evaluating exams in the province.

Manitoba differs slightly from other provinces
in that the government does not permit the
College to "register" technicians. "We're work-
ing with what we're given, and I can say that
pharmacy technicians will be regulated in
Manitoba," explains Guse. "But we do not have
the ability to register. It's just a different pro-
cess." Otherwise, the province's qualifications
are in sync with other jurisdictions' qualifications
for regulated pharmacy technicians. Guse says
the College is working closely with the
Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians
(CAPT) "to ensure that they and others that they
speak to know that although it is a slightly dif-
ferent system in Manitoba, we subscribe to all
the practice competencies and quality assur-
ances that are set up in other provinces."

2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 25-27

Manitoba Pharmacy Conference
RBC Convention Centre, Winnipeg
CONTACT: Manitoba Society of Pharmacists,
www.mbpharmacyconference.com

MAY 2-4

PDC 2014: CAPT Professional Development
Conference
Hilton Hotel and Suites, Niagara Falls, ON
CONTACT: Canadian Association of Pharmacy
Technicians, www.capt.ca

MAY 22-24

Annual Conference of British Columbia
Pharmacy Association
Fairmont Chateau Whistler, Whistler, BC
CONTACT: www.bcpharmacy.ca/conference

MAY 31-JUNE 3

Pharmacists' Association of Saskatchewan
Annual Conference, hosted with Canadian
Pharmacists Association (CPhA) and the
Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of
Canada (AFPC)
Saskatoon, Sask (location TBD)
CONTACT: www.skpharmacists.ca/events-and-education/pas-annual-conference
EMAIL: Donna Hudson at donna.hudson@skpharmacists.ca

JUNE 19-21

Ontario Pharmacists' Association Annual
Convention
Scotiabank Convention Centre, Niagara Falls, ON
CONTACT: www.opatoday.com

JUNE 20

4th Annual Manitoba Pharmacy Technician
Conference
Frederic Gaspard Theatre, University of

Manitoba Bannatyne Campus, Winnipeg
EMAIL: Debra Chartier at dlchartier@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 19-20

24th Annual Alberta Pharmacy Technician
Conference
Coast Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre, Calgary
CONTACT: Pharmacy Technicians Society of
Alberta, www.pharmacytechnicians.ab.ca

SEPTEMBER 19-21

Annual Conference of Pharmacists'
Association of NL
Sheraton Hotel Newfoundland, St. John's, NL
CONTACT: www.panl.net

SEPTEMBER 26-28

8th Annual Newfoundland and Labrador
Pharmacy Technician Conference
Hampton Inn & Suites, St. John's, NL
EMAIL: Lois Battcock at [pharmacytechconfer-
ence@hotmail.ca](mailto:pharmacytechconference@hotmail.ca)

SEPTEMBER 27

5th Pharmacy Technicians Breaking Barriers
Conference
WFCU Centre, Windsor, ON
CONTACT: www.phtconference.com

OCTOBER 3-4

9th Annual Conference of Pharmacy
Technician Society of British Columbia
River Rock Casino Resort, Richmond, BC
CONTACT: www.ptsbc.ca
EMAIL: info@ptsbc.ca

OCTOBER 4

32nd Annual Pharmacy Technicians Conference
Humber College Lakeshore Campus, 3199
Lakeshore Blvd West, Toronto
EMAIL: Sharon Lee at sharon.lee@humber.ca

Techs play role in destroying narcotics

WHEN IT COMES TO DESTROYING narcotics and controlled substances, pharmacy assistants and technicians can provide valuable assistance to pharmacists.

If a pharmacy has narcotics to destroy, it must follow proper procedures. The pharmacist must contact Health Canada's Office of Controlled Substances (OCS) for permission to destroy drugs covered by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. The OCS will require written documentation of the name, strength per unit and quantity of the substance to be destroyed. Once permission is received, the substance must be destroyed within 60 days, with two pharmacists signing as witnesses. The pharmacy must keep the documentation on file for two years.

The pharmacist may choose to delegate the paperwork to an assistant or technician, but he or she is ultimately responsible. "In our pharmacy," explains Trevor Shewfelt, a pharmacist at Dauphin Clinic Pharmacy in Dauphin, Manitoba, "a pharmacy assistant [there are no licensed technicians in that province yet] would compile the list of narcotics to be destroyed, fax Health Canada to receive the authorization (which would actually be addressed to the pharmacist who delegated the responsibility to her), get everything ready for destruction, and then call over two pharmacists to witness the destruction and sign the forms. She would then file the forms [so] that Health Canada could access them if it was to audit the pharmacy."

Shewfelt says a "trusted senior assistant" does all of the pharmacy's inventory management, including the paperwork for narcotics destruction, and involves the pharmacists only at the point they need to witness and sign. However, he stresses, "this is not a job I would delegate to just anyone. There can be so many dire consequences of not doing narcotics destruction properly."

Recently, Health Canada offered an alternative to destroying narcotics and controlled

drugs in the pharmacy. In September 2013, it issued a class exemption for pharmacists and persons in charge of a hospital, giving them authority to sell or provide narcotics or controlled drugs to a licensed dealer for the sole purpose of destruction.

Whatever option the pharmacy chooses, Shewfelt advises technicians and assistants involved in the destruction of narcotics to "pay attention to the details." Familiarize yourself with the forms and procedures, ask questions (do not guess!) and learn the ropes from an experienced senior technician or pharmacist.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Health Canada Office of Controlled Substances
Phone: 613-954-1541, Fax: 613-957-0110
E-mail: national_compliance_section@hc-sc.gc.ca

already working as pharmacy assistants to upgrade their skills and align with changes in scope of practice, without returning to school to complete a full-time training program.

NAPRA offers both online and classroom courses, as well as prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) examinations at authorized institutions across Canada. This year also saw the introduction of French classroom offerings at designated schools in Ontario.

First semester (September to December 2013) facts and figures:

- National online program enrollments: just under 400
- Other program delivery offered provincially at authorized institutions: just under 500
- Total number of institutions offering either online or classroom courses, or PLAR examinations as of January 2014: 12.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, visit <http://napra.ca/pages/bridgingprogram/default.aspx>.




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ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

Q. While the assistant/technician was attaching a label to a prescription for a narcotic, the vial tipped over and the contents spilled onto the counter and floor. What should we do?

A. As required by the Regulations to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, you should report the loss or theft of controlled drugs and substances directly to the federal Office of Controlled Substances within 10 days of discovery.* Loss and theft reporting forms are available from OCS.

Source: College of Pharmacists of B.C.

*You may also be required to fax a copy to the provincial regulatory authority. Check the requirements in your jurisdiction.