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New Brunswick College of Pharmacists
Ordre des pharmaciens du Nouveau-Brunswick

POSITION STATEMENT: MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING (MAiD)

PURPOSE
This position statement is intended to assist pharmacy professionals in complying with legal and professional standards. A companion document, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): MAiD addresses specific issues potentially posing challenges to pharmacy professionals.

PHILOSOPHY
Pharmacy professionals’ (indeed all health professionals') provision of MAiD to eligible patients is a major development in healthcare and Canadian society. Recent legislation (2016) and existing Standards of Practice published by NAPRA provide guidance to practitioners in their work with the healthcare team (which includes the patient and often their families) in the context of MAiD. The New Brunswick College of Pharmacists (the College/NBCP) aims to support practitioners in community, hospital and primary care practice in the provision of optimal care to patients receiving MAiD to ensure the public is served and protected.

INTRODUCTION
Federal Bill C-14 received royal assent on June 17, 2016 providing pharmacists and other members of the healthcare team with exemption from criminal prosecution in the provision of MAiD so long as it is provided with, “...reasonable knowledge, care and skill and in accordance with applicable provincial laws, rules or standards.” (House of Commons of Canada, 2016)

The New Brunswick (NB) provincial government has not passed further legislation (as of July 17th, 2018) therefore pharmacy professionals are guided in their provision of medications and cognitive services by three documents:
1. An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make related amendments to other Acts (medical assistance in dying) LINK
2. The New Brunswick College of Pharmacists (NBCP) / National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) Standards of Practice LINK
3. NBCP Code of Ethics LINK

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<th>First Approved:</th>
<th>December 5, 2016</th>
<th>Review Frequency:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Revised:</td>
<td>July 20, 2018</td>
<td>Review Method:</td>
<td>Deputy Registrar monitoring</td>
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<td>Reaffirmed:</td>
<td>September, 2018</td>
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Other provincial pharmacy regulatory authorities and pharmacy organisations have also published helpful guidance. NB pharmacy professionals are encouraged to review these documents for direction in terms of best practice with respect to therapeutics, drug supply chain and documentation in providing MAiD. Particularly useful documents are included in Appendix A: MAiD Resources.

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION
Pharmacy professionals may determine that their personal philosophic, cultural or spiritual values conflict with providing MAiD. Those exercising their right to conscientious objection must inform their supervisor/manager of their objection so provision can be made well in advance of any patient presenting for MAiD to ensure care is provided in a timely manner by another pharmacist and/or pharmacy technician who philosophically supports MAiD. Objecting pharmacists in leadership roles are obligated to determine how to best address issues of conscience with their peers and/or the College. Members must complete a conscientious objection action plan to mitigate risk of adverse patient impact resulting from their belief conflicting with patient need. The College plans to publish the “Commentary: Conscientious Objection” as a companion document to the Code of Ethics to assist members in safely navigating any conscientious objection. [To be released in January, 2019] Please refer to the Code of Ethics as a resource for navigating ethical concerns.

PHARMACY TECHNICIAN ROLE
Pharmacy technicians may be involved in the preparation of MAiD to the same degree as any pharmaceutical product.

PHARMACIST ROLE

Initial Patient Inquiries: Pharmacists should refer all initial inquiries regarding MAiD for a particular individual to a medical or nurse practitioner, to the NB Government informational webpage LINK, or to either of NB’s regional health authority (RHA) webpages (Horizon Health Network: LINK, Vitalité Health Network: LINK). As a member of the patient care team, the pharmacist should liaise with the patient’s primary health provider with the patient’s consent.

Interprofessional Collaboration: Federal legislation now specifies only a medical or nurse practitioner can provide and prescribe MAiD and that pharmacists may provide pharmaceuticals, care and education to patients and their families regarding the intervention without fear of recourse. Pharmacists are collaborators on the patient care team however, as a supporting member rather than leading MAiD.

MEDICATION THERAPY MANAGEMENT/PHARMACEUTICAL CARE
The patient care process (assessment, plan and follow-up) ensures patients receive comprehensive care by a pharmacist. The high-stakes nature of MAiD demands pharmacists fully engage in all steps in the process. The NBCP FAQs: MAiD document contains a detailed discussion of pharmaceutical care in the context of MAiD.
**Documentation**

Patient care can be documented in various formats and should adhere to general standards of practice. An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make related amendments to other Acts (medical assistance in dying) includes safeguards that pharmacists should document as being satisfied.

Provider and independent reviewer document patient has:

1. Met all criteria for MAiD
2. Capacity for and provided consent for MAiD

In addition to patient care documentation, Health Canada has developed the Canadian MAID Data Collection Portal (the Portal) to collect data on the request and provision of MAiD. The pharmacist who dispenses a substance in connection with the provision of MAiD will be required to document information listed under Schedule 7 of the Regulations for the monitoring of medical assistance in dying to the federal Minister of Health through the Portal within 30 days of dispensing the substance. Along with the Portal, Health Canada is expected to publish guidance documents and undertake outreach and engagement activities prior to the date of enforcement. These regulations are to come into force November 1st, 2018.

**PROVISION OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION FOR MAiD**

NB RHAs have collaborated with government, the College, ambulatory care agencies and internal risk management to establish MAiD prescriptions. These detailed prescriptions include medications, routes of administration and doses determined as first-line therapy for MAiD. The patient care team is encouraged to use these forms to ensure consistency and completeness of the MAiD regimen. While they are prescriptive, they do not preclude adjustment for patient-specific factors. In addition, these documents specify how medications should be securely provided to the patient (or professional administering the medicines) and how unused portions are returned to the originating pharmacy.

MAiD is not considered an urgent intervention. The patient care team should be aware that procurement of these medicines requires time (days to weeks), as they may not be in routine inventories. A reasonable timeline should be established with the team to facilitate planning of care.

Due to the high-risk nature of the medications used in MAiD, administration documentation (from the medical or nurse practitioner) should be retained so that the pharmacy professional can determine how much medication is expected for return to the pharmacy for destruction.

**CONCLUSION**

This position statement is meant to provide long-term guidance to pharmacy professionals. Pharmacy practice, as it relates to MAiD, will develop and change and practitioners are advised to consult current publications such as those listed in Appendix A. For further information, please contact the College directly (info@nbpharmacists.ca or call 506 857-8957).
Appendix A: MAiD RESOURCES

1. New Brunswick College of Pharmacists:  Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): MAiD
2. Regional Health Authorities’ guidance document and prescriptions  (By request from: info@nbpharmacists.ca)
3. Section 14 of the Criminal Code 2016 (Canada)
   By request from: accesdocument@cmq.org
6. Ontario College of Pharmacists:  Guideline and FAQs
7. College of Pharmacists of British Columbia:  Guidance for MAiD
11. Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers (CAMAP)
12. New Brunswick College of Pharmacists’ messages sent to members on June 16 and May 25, 2016 (Login required)

List of acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bill C-14</td>
<td>Received royal assent on June 17, 2016 and is now referred to as An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make related amendments to other Acts (medical assistance in dying)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CME</td>
<td>Continuing Medical Education</td>
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<td>CPhA</td>
<td>Canadian Pharmacists Association</td>
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<td>PAD</td>
<td>Physician Assisted Death</td>
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<td>MAiD</td>
<td>Medical Assistance in Dying</td>
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<td>RHA</td>
<td>Regional Health Authority</td>
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