

Your History!

Pharmacy Technicians through the ages.



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Speaker Disclosure

Presenter's Name: Erin Fingler

I have no current or past relationships with commercial entities.

I have received an speaker's fee from PTSA for this learning activity.



About me

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28 Years of Pharmacy Experience

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Learning objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will:

- **Describe the origins of pharmacy technician practice in Alberta**
- **Review major milestones in regulation**
- **Understand how technician responsibilities have evolved**
- **Recognize the impact of technician regulation on patient care**
- **Discuss future opportunities for the profession**

Pharmacy in Early Alberta

- Alberta became a province in 1905.
- Pharmacy was formally self-regulated in 1911.
- Early pharmacies relied on assistants and apprentices.
- These support personnel performed many functions that would later become technician responsibilities.



The Unsung Heroes

Early Pharmacy Support Personnel

Before technician regulation:

- Pharmacy assistants worked under pharmacist supervision.

Responsibilities included:

- Preparing prescriptions
- Inventory management
- Dispensing support
- Customer service
- Record keeping



Technician work existed long before technician regulation.

Evolution of Pharmacy Practice. Changes During the 20th Century.

- Shift from compounding to manufactured medications.
- Increasing complexity of drug therapy.
- Growing demand for pharmacists' clinical expertise.
- Need for greater role differentiation within pharmacy teams.



Health Professions Act – A Turning Point Year 2000

The Health Professions Act led to:



**Separation of regulation and advocacy led to the
Creation of:**

- Alberta College of Pharmacists
- Alberta Pharmacists' Association



Why This Matters

The new structure created opportunities for future pharmacy workforce modernization.

Expanded Scope for Pharmacists (2007)

Pharmacists gained authority to:

- Prescribe medications
- Adapt prescriptions
- Administer injections

Impact on Technicians

As pharmacists spent more time providing direct patient care:

- Greater need emerged for regulated technical experts.



Why Regulate Pharmacy Technicians?

Drivers for Change:

- Patient safety
- Accountability
- Standardized education
- Defined competencies
- Optimized pharmacy team performance



The Big Milestone – 2011

Pharmacy Technicians Become Regulated



Key Accomplishment

In 2011:

- Pharmacy technicians became a regulated health profession in Alberta.
- They joined pharmacists as regulated members under ACP.

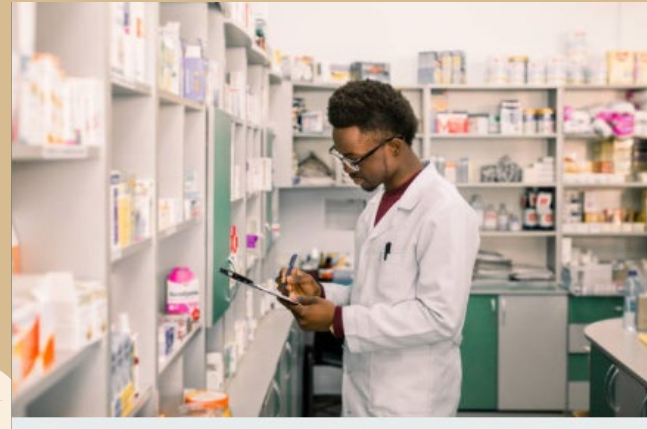
Significance

- Professional recognition
- Defined scope of practice
- Increased accountability
- Enhanced public trust

What Did Regulation Mean?

Responsibilities of Regulated Pharmacy Technicians

- Final technical check
- Product preparation
- Inventory and medication distribution oversight
- Accuracy and quality assurance
- Collaboration with pharmacists



Impact on Patient Care

Benefits

- Improved medication safety
- Better use of pharmacy resources
- Enhanced workflow efficiency
- Increased pharmacist availability for clinical services



Pharmacy Teams Today - Current State

Modern Pharmacy Teams include:

- Pharmacists
- Pharmacy technicians
- Pharmacy assistants
- Students
- Other healthcare professionals



The right professional doing the right work at the right time.

Looking Ahead

Future Opportunities

- Expanded technician roles
- Greater involvement in healthcare teams
- Technology integration
- Automation oversight
- Leadership and specialization





LET'S GET PERSONAL

Non-Sterile



Storage and Expiry

Cutting and repackaging
suppositories

Safety and Garbing

PPE and clothing were not
standardized

Weights and Measures

Identify pivotal moments that
influenced the outcome

Recipes

Often based on historical us

Sterile



Cleaning Hoods

Chemo: used to stick the top half of our body inside the hood

Wearing Gloves

We didn't always wear glove to compound in the IV room

Smoking

In the IV room? Yep, that was a thing!

Yellow Patient Gowns

All the IV room staff would use the same one or two for the day



Key Takeaways

Remember

- Technician work has existed throughout Alberta's pharmacy history
- Changes in pharmacy practice created a need for regulation
- Alberta regulated pharmacy technicians in 2011
- Regulation improved accountability, safety, and team-based care
- Pharmacy technicians are essential healthcare professionals

**You were important yesterday.
You are important today. And you will
be important tomorrow.**



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