



AGENDA ITEM 10.2

TOPIC: Proposed Regulatory Exemption for Non-Members – Pharmacy Professionals

History of Topic

General Information

The *Veterinarians Act* (VA) and Regulation 1093 currently outline an exclusive scope of practice model for veterinary medicine. This means that unless otherwise specifically stated, veterinary medicine may only be performed by a veterinarian or an auxiliary working under their supervision and delegation.

Through a combination of the legislative and regulatory frameworks established by the *Food and Drug Act* (federal), the *Drug and Pharmacy Regulation Act* (provincial) and the *Veterinarians Act* (provincial), licensed pharmacists are permitted to dispense, compound, and sell drugs for animals in accordance with a veterinary prescription. The Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP) recognizes this allowance and assumes professional responsibility over their members when they are providing these services.

The *Veterinary Professionals Act, 2024* (VPA) creates a new approach to the regulation of the practice of veterinary medicine that allows for the development of regulatory exemptions for persons who meet the guidelines, processes, terms, conditions, limitations, and/or prohibitions outlined in regulation to perform certain authorized activities related to animals.

Given this, a regulatory concept related to a regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals, which includes pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, was developed.

Legislative Framework

Section 9 of the VPA establishes the legislative authority for the development of an authorized activity model for the practice of veterinary medicine in Ontario. This framework is further supported by Schedule One of the VPA, where a list of seventeen (17) authorized activities is outlined.

Section 9 (5) 2 of the VPA clearly states that regulation language may be developed to allow for “a person who, under the *Pharmacy Act, 1991*, is a member of the Ontario College of Pharmacists” to carry out any such authorized activities in Schedule One of the VPA as may be

prescribed in accordance with any prescribed guidelines, processes, terms, conditions, limitations, or prohibitions.

Development of Regulatory Concept by Transition Council

Transition Council reviewed and forwarded for public consultation a regulatory concept related to a regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals in January 2025. This concept included:

1. Regulatory Exemption for Members of the OCP

Transition Council proposed the development of regulation language for members of the OCP for the following reasons:

- (a) Section 9 (5) 2 of the *VPA* states that regulation language may be developed to allow for “a person who, under the *Pharmacy Act, 1991*, is a member of the Ontario College of Pharmacists” to carry out any such authorized activities as may be prescribed in accordance with any prescribed guidelines, processes, terms, conditions, limitations, or prohibitions;
- (b) The College’s risk-based research and analysis in the area has indicated that certain members of the OCP possess the skills, knowledge, and judgement to safely perform specific authorized activities; and
- (c) The OCP recognizes their members’ ability to practise on animals and is supportive of a regulatory exemption that ties said exemption to their licensing model.

This exemption would apply for both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who are duly registered with the OCP in the Part A Class and would be subject to any terms, conditions, or limitations that may exist on their licence (including relevant scopes of practice). It would also require both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to comply with all policies of the OCP including any specific to animal care.

Should the College become aware of a pharmacy professional who is performing authorized who may not meet these requirements, the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario (CVPO) would have the ability to investigate these concerns including requesting proof of eligibility and adherence, and to pursue further action including reporting of a pharmacy professional to the OCP as well as its own ability to investigate under either unauthorized practice and/or the risk of harm clause if warranted.

2. Authorized Activities Permitted to be Performed by Pharmacy Professionals under Regulatory Exemption

Transition Council proposed the development of regulation language related to the following authorized activities (or components of) to be performed in the course of engaging in the practice of pharmacy on animals:

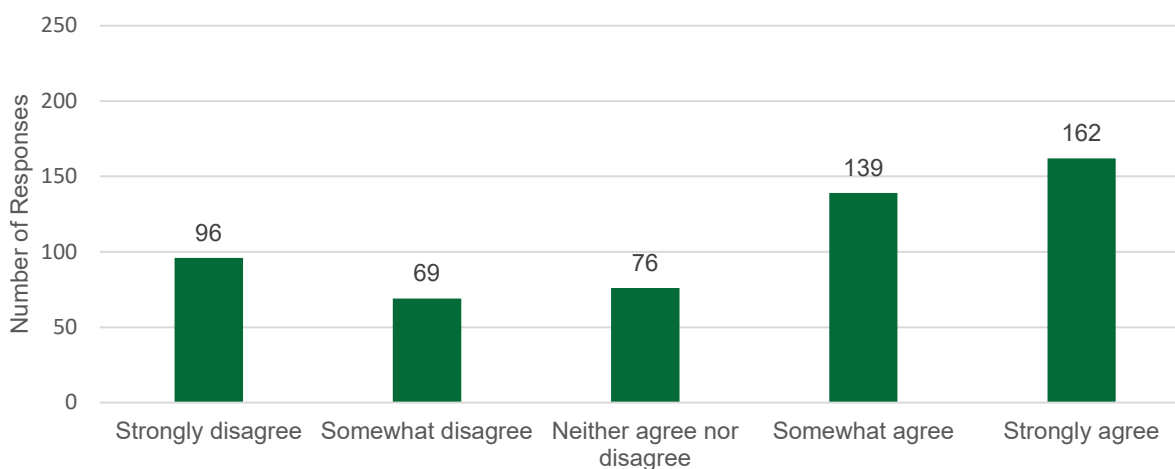
Authorized Activity	Reasoning
Compounding, dispensing, or selling a drug.	Pharmacy professionals are currently able to provide these authorized activities and would be expected to adhere to the Ontario College of Pharmacists policies.

General Consultation Feedback

A regulatory concept related to a proposed regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals was included in the list of regulatory concepts that were circulated for public consultation from February 11 to April 16, 2025.

The following quantitative responses were received related to a regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals:

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with a statement about Pharmacy Professionals on a Likert scale of responses from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. The figure below presents the results of 542 responses to the statement “*The proposed conditions and permitted authorized activities pharmacy professionals are appropriate to protect the public.*”.



In addition to the quantitative data, the following qualitative trends were noted:

- Concerns about a lack of veterinary-specific training for pharmacy professionals;
- Opposition to the exclusion of a requirement for proof of eligibility;
- Requests for clear regulatory language prohibiting therapeutic substitutions; and
- Concerns that fragmented communication between veterinarians and pharmacists could harm animal health and undermine professional accountability.

For more information on this consultation feedback, please refer to pages 40-42 of the full consultation report.

Consultation Feedback from Key Partners

Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA)

In its April 15, 2025, submission the OVMA shared:

- Recommendation to include regulatory language requiring a process for interprofessional collaboration between pharmacy professionals and prescribing veterinarians;
- Encouragement for the College to continue its collaboration with OCP to ensure standards meet or exceed public expectations and provide safety for animals; and
- Suggestion for the College to launch a public education campaign encouraging the use of accredited pharmacies and accredited veterinary facilities to ensure the quality and safety of medications.

Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT)

In its April 16, 2025, submission the OAVT had no comments to provide on this topic at this time.

Other Submissions

- Support for the concept, including the proposed conditions and permitted authorized activities for pharmacy professionals
 - o Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP); Ontario Pharmacists Association (OPA); Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioners; Ontario Sheep Farmers; Ontario Association of Swine Veterinarians; Ontario Association of Poultry Veterinarians
- Commitment to collaboration with the College in the development of an OCP Policy
 - o OCP
- Questions about the definition of a veterinary prescription, and whether it includes prescriptions intended for office use
 - o OCP; OPA
- Suggestions to permit the prescribing authorities of renewing and adapting prescriptions in the list of permitted authorized activities
 - o OPA
- Disagreement with the proposed ability for the CVPO to investigate concerns with pharmacy professionals who may not meet the requirements
 - o OPA

For more information related to these submissions, please refer to the beginning of page 131 of the full consultation report.

Further Information Gathered Based on Consultation Feedback

1. College's Oversight of Credentials of Non-Members

The regulatory exemption as presented and consulted on does not require a pharmacy professional to submit proof of their training and qualifications prior to dispensing, compounding, and/or selling drugs for the purposes of animal care. This is the same approach taken across all proposed regulatory exemptions. This approach is designed in recognition of the regulatory structure established under the VPA and that the CVPO can only create and confirm licensing requirements for its own members. When it comes to non-members practising certain authorized activities (or components of) under a regulatory exemption, the CVPO has the ability to create specific guidelines, processes, terms, conditions, and/or prohibitions for these persons to practise in these areas and then also has the ability to investigate their practise (including a direct review of their training and qualifications) should a concern be brought to its attention. If it is determined that the person poses a risk of harm or potential harm to the public (including not possessing the necessary components to work under the regulatory exemption) then the CVPO can report a pharmacy professional to the OCP as well pursue legal action against that pharmacy professional under the risk of harm clause should it be warranted.

2. Working with the OCP

The College has been actively working with the OCP to support their development of a policy related to their members relating to animals. The OCP has committed to having a policy in place by the end of 2025 (pending review and approval by their own Board of Directors) and have indicated a willingness for the policy to contain components related to the importance of relevant training in animal pharmacology, the differences between drug dispensing and drug therapy management in animals, recognition of the differences in the drug scheduling for humans compared to animals, and guidance that “based on a veterinary prescription” means without adaptations or substitutions by the pharmacy professional. They have also indicated a willingness to incorporate messaging related to interprofessional collaboration and the importance of veterinary and pharmacy professionals working together to provide safe animal care.

Additional Context to Assist with Decision Making

Based on the consultation feedback received and the additional information gathered, no additional changes or amendments to the regulatory concept related to a regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals are suggested at this time.

Transition Council Discussion

The information contained in this cover sheet is being presented to Transition Council for its review and discussion related to next steps. To aid in this discussion, Transition Council is encouraged to consider if any further clarification or additional information is necessary prior to providing its direction.

Potential Direction

Based on this review and discussion, Transition Council may direct:

1. That the regulatory concept be approved for submission to OMAFA as presented or amended;
2. That the regulatory concept be returned to College staff for further work and consideration; or
3. Any other direction as determined by Transition Council.

Attachments

1. Appendix A – Regulatory Concept (as presented in the public consultation)

Concept Chart – Pharmacy Professionals

Section	Primary Concepts Confirmed by Transition Council	Additional Information	Date of Confirmation
This column outlines the specific section of regulation.	This column provides a description of the objectives sought and the associated reasoning.	This column provides any additional specific information required to ensure clarity.	This column outlines when Transition Council confirmed the concept as well as any additional questions raised.
Pharmacy Professionals	<p>General</p> <p>Section 9 (5) 2 of the <i>Veterinary Professionals Act, 2024</i> (VPA) states that regulation language may be developed for allow for “a person who, under the <i>Pharmacy Act, 1991</i>, is a member of the Ontario College of Pharmacists” to carry out any such authorized activities as may be prescribed in accordance with any prescribed guidelines, processes, terms, conditions, limitations, or prohibitions.</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Many pharmacy professionals possess a specific set of skills, knowledge, and training that allow them to safely perform some authorized activities.</p> <p>Regulatory Exemption for Pharmacy Professionals</p> <p>Transition Council proposes a regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals (pharmacists and pharmacy technicians) who are duly registered members of the</p>	<p>Pharmacy professionals are currently permitted to dispense, compound, or sell drugs for animals under the <i>Veterinarians Act</i>. This proposed regulatory exemption mirrors these current allowances.</p> <p>Pharmacy professionals will not be required to provide proof of their eligibility under the regulatory exemption to the College of Veterinary Professionals of Ontario (CVPO). Instead, pharmacy professionals will be expected to review the regulatory exemption</p>	<p>Transition Council considered whether a pharmacist should be permitted to renew a veterinary prescription. Upon review, Transition Council determined that this was not in the public interest as renewing a prescription is considered an act of prescribing and is outside of the sphere of competency of the vast majority of pharmacy professionals when it comes to animal care.</p>

Section	Primary Concepts Confirmed by Transition Council	Additional Information	Date of Confirmation
	<p>Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP) in the Part A Class (subject to any terms, conditions or limitations that may exist on their certificate of registration). Transition Council also proposes that this regulatory exemption require pharmacy professionals to comply with all current practice standards of the OCP including those specific to animal care.</p> <p>Authorized Activities Permitted to be Performed by Pharmacy Professionals</p> <p>Transition Council proposes that any pharmacy professional who meets the above-mentioned criteria be permitted to perform the following authorized activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compounding, dispensing, or selling a drug based on a veterinary prescription. 	<p>and determine whether they meet the requirements.</p> <p>Should the CVPO become aware of a pharmacy professional who is offering authorized activities to the public who may not meet requirements, the CVPO will have the ability to investigate these concerns including requirement proof of eligibility and adherence.</p> <p>The CVPO will also be able to pursue further action including reporting a pharmacy professional to OCP and pursuing its own investigation.</p>	<p>Transition Council confirmed the proposed regulatory exemption for pharmacy professionals in January 2025. Part of this confirmation included recognition of the OCP's willingness to develop a standard of practice related to their members practice on animals and a commitment to ensuring cooperation between the two Colleges in the development of this work.</p>