

# The Island Capsule

PEI College of Pharmacists

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## *Adaptation and Therapeutic Substitution*

A brief review

Adaptation and therapeutic substitution was first legislatively enabled in PEI in the fall of 2013. The legislation allows pharmacists to adapt or therapeutically substitute a prescription if the prescription is not expired and it is not a monitored drug in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and Regulations*.

Pharmacists must have informed consent of the patient to complete an adaptation or therapeutic substitution and document their activity on the Pharmacist Prescribing Notification form. This article will focus on therapeutic substitution, providing a brief overview. See below.....

### MISSION

*Regulating the practice of pharmacy in the province so as to promote a high standard and safeguard the welfare of the public with regard to pharmaceutical service.*

## Therapeutic Substitution

Pharmacists may therapeutically substitute a drug for another drug, with an equivalent therapeutic effect, under the following circumstances:

- The prescription must be current (not older than one year), valid, authentic, and has refills remaining or an unused portion remaining.
- The prescription must be listed in Schedule I, II, or III but cannot be for a monitored drug.
- In the pharmacist's professional judgement, a change in drug would be clinically beneficial to the patient.

## *Did You Know?*



Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, students and interns are required to maintain personal, professional liability insurance in the amount of \$2 Million . The College requires members to submit evidence of current liability insurance as a condition of renewal each year. Members are also required to submit the most current evidence of professional liability insurance. Many policies run from July 1 to June 30 each year. Please ensure that the most current evidence is on file at the PEI College of Pharmacist office.



A pharmacist who undertakes prescribing to substitute a prescribed drug with a different drug that has an equivalent therapeutic effect shall assess the patient and specific circumstances, as appropriate, to be satisfied that:

- the substituted drug, dose and regimen will have an equivalent therapeutic effect based on indications approved by Health Canada or based on an intended use which is:
  - accepted as best practice and supported by medical literature, or
  - consistent with a research protocol in which the patient is enrolled.
- the pharmacist has sufficient knowledge and understanding have been obtained regarding the patient (e.g. his/her symptoms, medical history, health status, allergies/intolerances and safety considerations; and, where applicable, consider his/her personal circumstances, practical needs, values and preferences), condition being treated, patient specific circumstances and drug selection criteria in order that the therapeutic substitution supports the original therapeutic goal,
- the therapeutic substitution will maintain/enhance the effectiveness of the drug therapy or improve adherence and is not expected to introduce any problems or additional risks to the patient; and
- the therapeutic substitution drug selection supports the patient's best interest with respect to financial, formulary or payer considerations,
- When prescribing for the purposes of therapeutic substitution, a pharmacist shall not extend the prescription beyond the period when the original prescription and any refills would have finished or beyond one year from the original prescription date, whichever is sooner.

Pharmacist should take note that although they are legislatively enabled to therapeutically substitute a medication, the reimbursement by PEI Pharmacare for this service is dependent on the agreements between the PEI Pharmacists Association and the Province of PEI. Pharmacists with questions regarding reimbursement for providing a therapeutic substitution should contact the PEI Pharmacists Association.