



HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER FAQ

Background

Canada Health Infoway is working with Health Canada, the provinces and territories, and industry stakeholders to create a multi-jurisdiction e-prescribing service known as PrescribeIT[®]. This service, available to all prescribers, pharmacists and Canadians, is being scaled for use across the country and enables prescribers to electronically transmit a prescription to a patient's pharmacy of choice.

When will PrescribeIT[®] be available?

PrescribeIT[®] has launched in select communities in Ontario, Alberta, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan, with plans to roll-out to additional provinces across the country.

Is PrescribeIT[®] available to all prescribers and pharmacies?

PrescribeIT[®] is a national service available to all community prescribers and community pharmacies across the country. We are working closely with Health Canada, the provinces and territories, and private sector health IT providers to enable prescribers and retail pharmacies to participate regardless of the EMR or pharmacy system they use.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a fee for using PrescribelT®?

Health Canada has provided the non-repayable seed capital to launch PrescribelT® which essentially subsidizes or offsets the cost of the service for several years. This allows us to provide a fee-holiday for participating pharmacies.

What types of prescriptions will PrescribelT® support?

PrescribelT® allows prescribers to electronically prescribe medications including narcotics, compounds and devices such as lancets and blood test strips.

How will PrescribelT® meet the requirements for original signatures?

Health Canada, NAPRA (National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities) and the Office of Controlled Substances have established policies that indicate electronic signatures are equally acceptable as an original physician signature.

What if the patient's preferred pharmacy is not PrescribelT® enabled?

Our goal is to make PrescribelT® available to all community prescribers and community pharmacies across the country. If a patient's preferred pharmacy location is not yet connected to PrescribelT®, prescribers may continue to use their previous method of prescribing – i.e. write, print or fax.

How is PrescribelT® different from what I'm doing now?

- Prescriptions sent by auto-faxing (or e-faxing) send the prescription to the pharmacy as an image. The prescription details are then interpreted by the pharmacist and typed into the pharmacy management system leaving open the possibility for transcription errors.
- PrescribelT® electronic prescriptions are sent as data. Prescription details are auto-populated directly into the pharmacy software. As a result, the possibility of transcription errors is reduced, leading to improved patient safety and decreased medication errors.
- Electronic prescriptions, unlike paper or fax prescriptions, are not visible to anyone except the prescriber and pharmacist, providing additional security and privacy around a patient's personal health and prescription information.

Can a prescriber modify a prescription after it has been sent via PrescribelT®?

Prescribers are able to cancel an existing prescription and issue a new prescription. However, PrescribelT® does not support a function to alter or modify a prescription after it has been sent. The clinical communications feature included in PrescribelT® allows prescribers and pharmacies to exchange secure messages through their EMR and Pharmacy Management Systems to discuss medication related issues.

Can a prescriber discontinue a medication through PrescribelT®?

Prescribers are able to cancel an existing prescription and issue a new prescription. The clinical communications feature allows prescribers and pharmacies to exchange secure messages through their EMR and Pharmacy Management Systems and to discuss medication related issues.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is access to the provincial formulary available with PrescribelT®?

In jurisdictions where it is available, PrescribelT® will enable access to provincial drug formularies providing prescribers with coverage details and medication cost information. Access to the provincial formulary will be embedded within the EMR providing a seamless experience for the prescriber.

Will prescribers be notified if the pharmacist changes a prescription?

Just like today, prescribers will not be notified of small changes, such as a brand substitution. For more significant changes where a pharmacist adapts a prescription, prescribers will continue to be notified, consistent with current practice. The clinical communications feature included in PrescribelT® greatly expedites prescriber / pharmacy communication.

When a patient is discharged from hospital can a prescription be sent to a community pharmacy using PrescribelT®?

At this time, PrescribelT® is only available to community prescribers and community pharmacies. Connecting hospital clinical information systems (CIS) to PrescribelT® is being considered for future releases.

How is patient choice of pharmacy maintained with PrescribelT®?

Maintaining patient choice is of utmost importance to PrescribelT®. At the time of prescribing, the prescriber will confirm with the patient his/her pharmacy of choice. If the pharmacy is not PrescribelT® enabled, the prescriber may revert to his/her usual method of prescribing – i.e. write, print or fax.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is PrescribelT[®] simple and easy to use? Does PrescribelT[®] place additional workflow requirements on prescribers or pharmacies?

- PrescribelT[®] integrates directly into a prescriber's existing EMR or in a pharmacy management system and is designed to produce minimal changes for users.
- In addition, the PrescribelT[®] team is studying existing prescriber workflows and identifying ways to integrate electronic prescribing into prescriber practice settings with minimal disruption to clinic operations.
- Similarly, the PrescribelT[®] team is also studying existing pharmacy workflows to identify ways to help integrate electronic prescribing into pharmacy practices to further enhance day-to-day operations.

What if a patient expresses concerns about their information being made accessible to others via PrescribelT[®]?

- Under provincial privacy laws, health care practitioners have obligations about requests from patients who wish to limit the collection, use and/or disclosure of their health. In such cases, you should follow your existing policies and procedures for addressing those requests with your patient in compliance with the law.
- If a prescriber decides to follow the patient's request, a traditional paper prescription may be used rather than PrescribelT[®]. Despite the use of a paper prescription, the patient's dispense information will still be retained by their pharmacy.
- If the patient has expressed general concerns about their health information being made available in provincial systems, you may also consider applying the controls in your electronic medical record (EMR) or Pharmacy management system (PMS) to limit access to the patient's record, if appropriate. Contact your EMR or PMS vendor for guidance on how to limit access to health information in your systems.

How will the PrescribelT[®] team support users in the successful adoption of the service?

Who should I contact if I have an issue using PrescribelT[®]?

- While PrescribelT[®] has been designed to minimize workflow impact on prescribers and pharmacies, we recognize that with any new technology, introducing change can be challenging.
- If you experience issues using PrescribelT[®], please contact your EMR or pharmacy management system's customer support service. They are equipped to answer your questions and guide you through the problem resolution process.

Not all the prescribers at my clinic want to use PrescribelT[®]. Can those who do sign up?

Yes. As long as a prescriber is using an EMR application that has been PrescribelT[®] enabled he/she can be registered, activated, and trained on PrescribelT[®]. As others at the clinic express interest and are ready to participate, the same registration, activation and training process will be completed with the interested prescriber.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will a prescriber need to administer patient consent before collecting health information with PrescribelT®?

PrescribelT® does not introduce new uses and disclosures of health information that are not presently available to clinicians. PrescribelT® simply changes the way that prescription information and clinical communications are relayed. You should continue to obtain patient consent for the collections, uses, and disclosures of health information that you currently obtain consent for. In cases where you are permitted to use PrescribelT® without patient consent, you are still expected to inform patients about your information handling practices. In some jurisdictions, you are legally obligated to inform patients about your information handling practices.

What if a patient makes a formal request to access or correct their records in PrescribelT®?

Patient data is not held and cannot be viewed through PrescribelT®. Rather, patient data is stored in a provincial or territorial Drug Information System that includes a complete medication history of both the prescription and dispensing record. However, since PrescribelT® information is within your control, under the law you must respond to such individual access requests.

Does an e-signature replace a wet signature? How is a Prescriber's identity verified?

PrescribelT® allows prescribers to electronically prescribe medications including narcotics, compounds and devices such as lancets and blood test strips and meets the requirements for original signatures. As part of the registration process, PrescribelT® users will be asked to provide a cell phone number.

The cell phone number is used as part of a two-step login process required each time a user logs into PrescribelT®. Similar to the experience with online banking or online shopping, a two-step login will send a code to the registered cell phone to authenticate the user. This additional layer of security helps to confirm the user's identity and protects the account from inappropriate use or misuse.

Health Canada, NAPRA (National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities) and the Office of Controlled Substances have established policies that indicate electronic signatures are equally acceptable as an original physician signature.

Is PrescribelT® secure? How is patient personal health and prescription information protected?

- Protecting patient personal health and prescription information is of utmost importance to PrescribelT®. All information is maintained in accordance with all provincial, federal and legal obligations and ensures personal health information remains confidential.

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- Infoway has ensured through contractual obligations that others do not have or assert any ownership or other proprietary right to the data nor can they sell, disclose, transfer, assign, lease or otherwise commercially exploit the data. Furthermore, all of PrescribIT's data is stored and processed within Canadian borders, encrypted at rest and in transit, and will not be released or used for any commercial purposes.
- A Privacy Impact Assessment as well as a Threat Risk Assessment have been completed to identify privacy and information security risks associated with deployment in each jurisdiction. A summary of these assessments is available to you, either directly through Infoway or through other entities providing PrescribIT® in your jurisdiction.
- Please contact privacy@infoway-inforoute.ca to find out more about these assessments.