

### What is the definition of an RN prescriber?

An RN prescriber refers to an RN(s) with an expanded scope of practice to include prescriptive authority.

### Is RN prescriber another type of nursing license?

No, RN prescriber is a designation for an RN(s) who has the necessary education, authorization, and competence to add prescribing to their individual scope of practice.

### How will it be determined that a particular practice area is appropriate for introducing RN prescribing?

The potential for RN prescribing to be introduced to a particular practice area is decided through a collaborative conversation between the RN (s), the employer sponsor, and the collaborative team. There must be agreement by all parties that the introduction of RN prescribing has been identified as needed and that it will be beneficial to the client's served in that practice area. RN prescribing is an expansion of the RN scope of practice to include access to prescriptive services for **individuals with defined health care needs** and in **contexts where gaps in services exist**.

RNs applying to the College must adhere to the limitations set out by the College and follow the RN Prescribing Practice Guidelines. As part of the application, the RN must declare that they have an employer sponsor who has developed in collaboration with them, a guidance document to outline the expectations for RN prescribing, as well as additional supports and resources available including access to another authorized prescriber within a supportive collaborative team. If the RN cannot declare that these conditions of sponsorship are met, then they will not be able to proceed with the application. Likewise, the employer must also formally agree to the conditions of sponsorship. After the RN's application to the College is approved, RN prescribers will work with their supportive collaborative health care team, under the conditions established by the employer sponsor and guidance document.

Once the RN has successfully completed the required steps to add RN prescribing to their individual scope of practice as outlined in the RN Prescribing Framework <https://crnnl.ca/practice/practice-resources/trending-topics/rn-prescribing/> The College will review the application to ensure all regulatory requirements are met prior to granting the authority to prescribe.

### How do I become an RN prescriber?

RN prescribing involves an expansion of an RN's individual scope of practice. RNs must obtain the required additional education, have employer sponsorship, and be able to obtain and maintain competence in prescribing to be able to apply to the College for authorization to add RN prescribing to their scope of practice.

### What is the process for RN prescribing as established by the College?

The College will review each RN application to ensure all the requirements are met prior to authorizing the RN to prescribe. The College will then notify the RN and prepare the required public communication (e.g.,



post notification of the RN's prescriptive authority on the College's website under Member Search).

Please review the RN Prescribing Framework for details on the conditions required for employer sponsorship and the requirements for education. <https://crnnl.ca/practice/practice-resources/trending-topics/rn-prescribing/>

Once authorized to prescribe, the RN, as a self-regulated health care professional is responsible and accountable to prescribe according to the RN Prescribing Practice Guidelines as established by the College, their employer's guidance document, and evidence-informed best practices. RNs authorized to prescribe in NL must adhere to all applicable Federal and Provincial legislation, and all other regulatory requirements (e.g., Newfoundland Labrador Pharmacy Board (NLPB), College of Physicians and Surgeons Newfoundland Labrador (CPSNL), etc.) related to prescribing, all relevant College documents, and employer policies. Prescriptive authority is not portable to other health care contexts.

### What education am I required to complete?

The RN authorized to prescribe has an expanded scope of practice; as such, RNs applying for authorization to prescribe must complete additional education as approved by CRNNL Council (theory and practice components), or any other educational program deemed equivalent. Currently, the three courses required for RN prescribing are being offered online through Saskatchewan Polytechnic. The three courses are NURS 1713 Health Assessment and Clinical Reasoning consisting of 39 hours of theory, NURS 1714 Drug Prescribing for RNs consisting of 40 hours of theory, and NURS 1715 Clinical Decision-Making for RN Prescribers that consists of a minimum of 80 to 160 hours of preceptored clinical with a performance exam. The preceptored clinical will be in your authorized area of practice. For more information on the educational component, please contact the Practice Team at [practiceteam@crnnl.ca](mailto:practiceteam@crnnl.ca).

### What is included in the RN's prescriptive authority?

Once an RN has obtained the required education, authorization, and competence the RN is authorized within the parameters outlined by the employer sponsor, to prescribe medications, order laboratory and diagnostic screening tests (including but not limited to ultrasound, x-ray, CT, etc.), and/or other non-pharmacological interventions, and make referrals.

### What does RN prescribing involve?

RN prescribing involves using the nursing process to:

- assess individuals within an employer sponsored area(s) of need, whom have conditions and require nursing care within the RN's competence and authorization to prescribe
- establish a plan of care which may include:
  - ordering laboratory and diagnostic screening tests (including but not limited to ultrasound, x-ray, CT, etc.) and/or other non-pharmacological interventions, and/or make referrals
- prescribe medications
- provide nursing care and services

### How will RN prescribing affect other health care professionals?

RN prescribing is an expansion of the RN scope of practice to include access to prescriptive services for



individuals with defined health care needs and in contexts where gaps in services exist. RN prescribing is anticipated to improve timely access to prescriptive services by using experience and nursing knowledge specific to the practice setting to safely and competently proceed with the clients established plan of care, supported by a collaborative team. This may include ordering diagnostic and screening tests, making referrals, and prescribing medications for a targeted population without the client having to make another appointment or having to travel to see an authorized prescriber.

### How does an RN get authority to prescribe?

There are a number of steps involved in expanding your individual scope of practice to include RN prescribing:

- **Step one:** Discuss with your employer how the setting or population in which you work is an area of need that would benefit by having RN prescribing. The employer sponsor must agree to the conditions of sponsorship.
- **Step two:** Evaluate your areas of expertise and your interest in expanding your individual scope of practice.
- **Step three:** Register for and complete the required continuing education courses.
- **Step four:** Complete the College's application process and obtain the required approval. The application process includes an application form and a declaration form.

### What are the conditions required for employer sponsorship?

The employer sponsor must:

- develop, in consultation with the RN applying for RN prescribing authorization, an evidence-informed guidance document detailing the parameters for the role of RN prescriber
- support RNs authorized to prescribe to adhere to their standards of practice and requirements for self-regulation
- support access to the health care collaborative team to aid RNs to prescribe in a safe, competent, and ethical manner
- support the RN authorized to prescribe to maintain competence in the identified area of practice

### What is a guidance document?

A guidance document is an evidence-informed document used in the identified area of need/setting/context to guide decisions related to ordering of diagnostic and laboratory tests, and other non-pharmacological interventions, making referrals, and prescribing medications. This document may be in the form deemed appropriate by the employer sponsor (e.g., protocol, algorithm, policy, practice procedure, guideline, etc.). The guidance document may be provincial or national, but it must be contextualized to the RN's authorized client population/context.

### Will there be a list of medications RNs are authorized to prescribe?

The scope of practice for the RN prescriber will be identified with the employer sponsor and the specific details will be outlined in the employer's guidance document. The RN prescriber will not be limited to a specific "list" of medications, but there may be a drug class specific or other limits relevant to the identified



area or population, or by the College.

### Can any RN apply for prescribing?

Any RN can avail of the continuing education courses required to have the theory and practice components of RN prescribing. However, the RN will not be able to use their prescriptive authority unless there is authorization from their employer (employer sponsor).

### What designation does the RN authorized to prescriber use?

Registered Nurse - Prescriber

The College will have a notation on the register/website (member search) to indicate the RN has met the criteria to prescribe. The notation on the Register will also include all the specific area(s)/populations where the RN is authorized to prescribe.

### If I change jobs, can I still maintain my prescriptive authority in my new job?

Authorization to prescribe is not transferrable to another identified area/setting/context without repeating components of the authorization processes (i.e., the RN prescriber must have sufficient clinical practice experience in the new clinical area and have a guidance document before being authorized to prescribe in that new area as identified by the employer). The RN will not have to repeat the formal educational component.

### I am an RN who is using other authorization mechanisms currently to prescribe medications. Can my previous experience be considered when applying to become an RN prescriber?

RNs working in rural and remote areas (e.g., Regional Nurses) with validated experience in prescribing under their employer's authorization mechanisms (e.g., care/medical directives) which could include First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Clinical Practice Guidelines may avail of a Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) process to determine if the designation of RN prescriber can be obtained.

### Can RNs in self-employment be authorized to prescribe?

At this time, self-employed RNs may not prescribe as part of self-employment.

### What are the limitations on RN prescribing?

At this time, RNs prescribers will not prescribe outside the parameters of the College's and employer sponsor authorization. RN prescribers:

**Will not** prescribe for themselves.

**Will not** prescribe for family members, and others close to them (e.g., personal relationship) EXCEPT if the prescribing decision is specific to the clinical practice area where they have been authorized, and the RN has taken reasonable steps to transfer the care and there is no other authorized prescriber available. Transfer of care must occur at the earliest opportunity.