Taking practice innovation to the next level

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PHARMACISTS ACROSS CANADA HAVE SEEN A GREAT EXPANSION of their scope of practice in the past decade. Although there have been several articles in recent years discussing the slow and incomplete rate of change in pharmacy practice,¹⁻³ it must be recognized that some pharmacists have very effectively embraced their broadened scope of practice. Examples of this are perhaps most abundant in Alberta, where the scope of practice of the pharmacist is arguably the most advanced. It is the only province where pharmacists who have additional prescribing authorization are able to independently initiate and manage drug therapy without a collaborative agreement in place.⁴

Several studies of pharmacists using their expanded scope of practice have previously been published, with recent examples including the RxACT,⁵ Rx EACH⁶ and RxING⁷ trials. These studies highlight the clinical benefits of pharmacists practising to their advanced scope. However, it may also be valuable to highlight some of the individual practices that are in place in nonstudy settings. Some pharmacists may realize that advanced practice is possible, but may not be aware of many specific, real-life examples of how pharmacists have adapted and used new practice opportunities to improve patient care. Therefore, the objective of this series of pharmacist profiles is

to highlight some of the excellent individual pharmacist practices that are in place for the purpose of inspiring others to advance their own practice for the betterment of their patients.

For this series, we selected a small sample of pharmacists to feature. Realizing that there are many more great individual examples of pharmacist practices than we could possibly cover, we had to be selective about who to highlight. We selected non-academic, non-advanced degree pharmacists who have created unique practices and have successfully taken advantage of their opportunities for expanded scope in Alberta. We contacted a variety of individuals to find out about these practices, including speaking with the participants themselves. From the resulting list, a small number of pharmacists were contacted to be interviewed. The interviews will be published in the next few issues of *CPIJ*. The featured pharmacists not only provide insight into their practices but also discuss the barriers they faced, how they overcame these and the feedback they have received from patients and other health care professionals. While the illustrative stories are from Alberta, we hope that readers will see how fully embracing the practice opportunities that are available to them can be so professionally satisfying, regardless of the province in which they reside. ■

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