

COVID-19 & Delivery Requirements



Acknowledgement: The College recognizes the assistance of pharmacist Alan Strashok, Express Scripts Canada Pharmacy, in the preparation of this guidance document.

Importance of Delivery Service

The role of pharmacy delivery service in a pandemic context is crucial, notably for the following reasons:

1. It meets the needs of patients who are unable to leave their home, and
2. it helps to reduce patient / staff interactions in pharmacies.

Pharmacies not currently offering delivery service are encouraged to develop this resource for the duration of the pandemic. Pharmacies already offering delivery service are encouraged to expand the service. Prioritization and management of patient expectations is also encouraged.

General principles

1. Protocols for appropriate hand hygiene and physical distancing
 - It is imperative pharmacy managers work with delivery persons to develop protocols such as appropriate hand hygiene, cleaning of the interior of the vehicle and the door handles of the vehicle, in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19.
 - Delivery staff must follow protocols consistently, as if they or all recipients may be sick, and must always respect physical distancing requirements.
2. Whenever possible,
 - limit deliveries to medically necessary items.
 - complete payment at the pharmacy level prior to delivery. This step limits interaction between the patient and the delivery person at point of delivery. If the delivery person must receive payment, favour payment methods that limit interactions and contact between individuals.
3. On the outside of the packaging,
 - indicate the name of the designated person who will be receiving the delivery.
 - indicate transport conditions (related to temperature, fragility, and safety).
 - include minimum required patient or patient agent information (name, address, phone number, etc.) in order to maintain confidentiality.
4. Upon arrival at the delivery address, the delivery person must
 - contact the person by telephone to tell them that he/she is on site.
 - place the prescription bag near the door or mailbox and step back at least 2 meters and wait for the patient or patient agent to pick up the prescription. **The prescription bag/package may not be left unattended before a person comes to the door and retrieves it.**
5. To document delivery,
 - the delivery person must sign the delivery log noting that medication was delivered, the time of delivery, and that the designated person received the delivery.
 - In lieu of signed receipts, the delivery log must be retained for a period of four years (Regulation 17.33(2)).

Canada Post Requirements

Some pharmacies utilize couriers or Canada Post to deliver medications. In light of Canada Post's current "Knock, Drop and Go" policy, confirmation of delivery will be lacking. Use of a courier who **will** confirm a delivery was made to the patient is preferable; however, if using Canada Post, another mechanism for timely confirmation of patient receipt of their medication **is required**.

Operationally, there may be more than one way to accomplish this, which is left to the professional judgment of the pharmacist. **If Canada Post has no proof of patient receipt of the delivery, it is the responsibility of the pharmacy to follow up by phone to confirm successful delivery.**

- Canada Post can supply online delivery notification within the hour after delivery has been completed. After delivery notification from Canada Post, a pharmacy team member (or another employee) must call the patient and confirm receipt.
- The following script is suggested. *Hi (patient name), I am (pharmacy personnel's name) calling from the (name) Pharmacy to confirm that you have received your medications on (the day shown in the Canada Post notification). Was everything in order with your package? Do you have any questions? Thank you for confirming.*
- Follow-up must be done very soon after delivery is completed. Minimally, the follow up call must be performed the same day of delivery.
- Documentation of the reason for not obtaining a signature from the patient or their agent is required. **After the pharmacy team member completes the call, they document the call in the patient's private file, including the date and time the call was made.**
- If the follow-up call (after delivery is completed) must be performed by an employee who is not a registered member of the College or who works remotely from the pharmacy, that **employee must not have access to medication names or other personal health information; only prescription numbers and patient names. Also, if that employee is working remotely, documentation of the call must be submitted to the pharmacy for later addition to the patient profile.**
- Documentation of confirmation is to be retained for four years (Regulation 17.33(2)).

Better Practice Suggestion

Pharmacies who do not currently have a process in place for delivery of medications could consider enlisting the involvement of community groups; this has been the case in some rural communities. The pharmacy manager would be responsible for training volunteers the same way they would a paid employee, and for having processes in place to protect both volunteers and patients.

Consider including information in the package for the patient that outlines, for example, generic substitutions, and instructions for re-order if they are different than usual. Including such material may decrease the need for more telephone calls after delivery.