



Conscientious Objection and Pharmacy Services

In this document, "Pharmacy Professional" includes members (licensed pharmacists and licensed pharmacy technicians) and pharmacy interns (extended and student interns who are practising under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist or licensed pharmacy technician).

The Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals (SCPP) [Code of Ethics](#) states that: "*A member shall hold the health and safety of the public to be of first consideration in the practice of their profession, rendering to each patient the full measure of their ability as an essential health care practitioner.*"

While SCPP recognizes a Pharmacy Professional's right to object to providing products or services based on sincerely held conscientious or religious beliefs, Pharmacy Professionals must not exercise that right at the expense of the patient. Objecting Pharmacy Professionals must not abandon their ethical duty of care to the patient and must respect the patient's right of autonomy to make informed decisions and to receive pharmacy products and services based on objective, accurate and timely information.

To comply with the Code of Ethics, the SCPP expects the following from Pharmacy Professionals who object to providing products or services on the basis of conscience or religion:

1. The Pharmacy Professional must inform their manager of their objection in advance and must proactively participate in a process designed to respect all patients and to ensure all patients receive the products and services in a way that minimizes hardship to the patients.
2. The Pharmacy Professional must not communicate the basis of their objection to the patient, must not impose any moral judgment nor attempt to influence the patient. All communication with the patient must be sensitive and respectful.
3. The Pharmacy Professional must ensure continuity of care by making a timely referral in good faith to an alternative provider who is non-objecting, available, accessible and who can provide the product or service.
4. The Pharmacy Professional may not withhold information about the existence of the product or service because it conflicts with their conscientious or religious beliefs.
5. The Pharmacy Professional must provide care in emergency situations where it is necessary to prevent harm or risk to the patient and where no alternative option exists, even when doing so may conflict with the Pharmacy Professional's conscientious or religious beliefs.

Pharmacy Managers who become aware of a conscientious objection must devise a plan for their pharmacy team to ensure that all patients have access to the products and services they need in a professional, timely and respectful manner.

Every Pharmacy Professional, Pharmacy Manager and Proprietor is required to comply with The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018 (the Code). Pharmacy Professionals, Pharmacy Managers and Proprietors should be aware of the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the Code (which include gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, family status, etc.). For more information on what constitutes discrimination in Saskatchewan, SCPP encourages Pharmacy Professionals and Proprietors to consult with the [Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission](#).

Pharmacy Managers and Proprietors are responsible to ensure that all non-regulated pharmacy staff working in their community pharmacy communicate with patients in a respectful and sensitive manner, do not impose any moral judgment or attempt to influence patients, and do not impede the patient's right to receive products and services based on objective, accurate and timely information.

This policy aligns with [NAPRA's Principles of Professionalism](#) for the profession of pharmacy, which have been adopted by the SCPP, and, in particular Principle #1: "*Cares for patients and their support networks as its primary motivation.*"