

Frequently Asked Questions: Pharmacy Health Care Services

What pharmacy healthcare services are covered?

All residents of Newfoundland and Labrador with an active MCP card can now visit their local pharmacy for the following services at no charge:

- Prescription extensions up to a maximum of 12 months.
- Assessment and prescribing for nine ailments/conditions including uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs), conjunctivitis, Herpes Zoster (Shingles), fungal nail infections, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), nicotine dependence (smoking cessation), Herpes Simplex (cold sores), fungal skin infections and hemorrhoids.
- Assessment and prescribing for hormonal contraceptives.

What are established limits?

Reasonable limits or maximums have been established for how many times during a twelve month period, that a patient with an active MCP card will not be charged the pharmacist fee for these services.

These established limits are:

Prescription Extensions:

- A maximum of four (4) prescription extensions will be covered in a twelve month period. Multiple prescriptions can be extended at one time.

Hormonal Contraceptives:

- A maximum of three (3) assessments for hormonal contraceptives will be covered in a twelve month period.

Assessment of Ailments/Conditions:

- An established number of assessments for select ailments/conditions are allowed in a 12-month period. This ensures that individuals with frequent reoccurrences of an ailment/condition follow-up with a physician or nurse practitioner for further testing/assessments as required.

Ailments and Conditions	Maximum Claims in One Year
Conjunctivitis	2
Fungal Nail infection	3
Herpes Zoster (Shingles)	2
UTI (Uncomplicated)	3
Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)	2
Hemorrhoids	3
Nicotine Dependence (Smoking Cessation)	3
Herpes Simplex (Cold Sores)	4
Fungal Skin Infections	3

Why are these services now being provided by pharmacists?

Pharmacists are easily accessible across the province and can provide timely care, preventing complications arising from delayed treatment. Expanding pharmacist services should provide a source for health services to individuals who are not attached to a primary care provider such as a doctor or nurse practitioner.

Is it safe to be assessed by a pharmacist for treatment?

Yes, pharmacists are health professionals with extensive education, who are trained to complete these health assessments. In addition to this, there are standards of practice that a pharmacist is expected to follow in providing these services to the people of the province. This involves maintaining competence through professional development activities designed to maintain and expand knowledge and skills. The pharmacist will refer the patient to a physician or nurse practitioner if they feel a more thorough assessment is required and is in the best interest of the individual.

Will a pharmacist assessment always result in a prescription?

No. The pharmacist may not prescribe if they determine that a prescription medication is not needed; that there may be a potential negative interaction with an existing medication; or that a physician or nurse practitioner should complete a more thorough assessment.

How do I get coverage?

Simply present your MCP card to the pharmacist, and the fees (within the established limits) will be covered by the Province.

How does this impact NLPDP beneficiaries?

NLPDP beneficiaries will now be able to have assessments and treatments prescribed by pharmacists for these additional select ailments and conditions. The coverage of dispensing fees and prescription drug costs will remain the same as determined by their NLPDP plan coverage.

Will all pharmacies offer these services?

It is possible that some pharmacies or individual pharmacists will choose not to offer these services. Please check with your pharmacy of choice to inquire if they will be offering these expanded services. Also, a pharmacist may not prescribe if they determine that there is insufficient information or added risks to the patient. In these cases, pharmacists should refer the patient to their primary health care provider or another appropriate health care professional.

Do I need to make appointments at the pharmacy?

Check with your local pharmacy to inquire about the services they will provide, and whether an appointment is needed.

Will I be able to access these services immediately?

Please check with your pharmacy to inquire when these services will be available. There may be staff training that has to be completed before all services can be offered.

What do I do if my pharmacy doesn't offer these services?

You can check with other pharmacies in your area to see if they may be able to help. If so, you simply present your MCP card to the pharmacist who will be performing the assessment.

Does universal coverage include the cost of the drug?

No. The Provincial Government will cover only the pharmacy assessment fee, within identified maximum limits. The patient is still responsible for the drug cost and dispensing fee. Many patients have health insurance/drug plan coverage to assist with these costs.

Does assessing for hormonal contraceptives mean free birth control?

No, only the assessment fee will be covered. Patients are still responsible for the drug cost and dispensing fee, if applicable. Many patients have health insurance/drug plan coverage to assist with these costs.

What if I have private health insurance?

Many private health insurance plans do not cover pharmacist assessment fees. This initiative provides coverage for all residents of the province with an active MCP card.