

Referral Guide: Primary Care Clinical Pharmacist

What they do, how they can help with your patients

Summary:

This Referral Guide describes typical cases, but there may be additional services and examples where PCN Pharmacists can provide care to your patients. Please contact a PCN Pharmacist to inquire whether your patient could benefit from a referral.

Reason for referral	Examples
Medication Management Services	• Direct patient care with the goal of optimizing drug therapy and associated health outcomes • Assess whether drug therapy is necessary, effective, & safe • Address unmet needs to support adherence, minimize cost barriers, and resolve other concerns • Ensure medications are appropriate across multiple conditions and review for possible medications contributing to symptoms (or medication causes) • Provide support and education to improve overall health. • Provide care plans to support shared decision-making
Chronic Disease Management	• Medication and dose optimization, including ensuring medications are appropriately renally dosed • Assist with goal setting and problem solving to support management of chronic diseases • Provide support and education to improve overall health • Address barriers to adherence • Provide care plans that reflect patient values • Facilitate and coordinate referrals to IPT Allied Health (i.e. Registered Dietician, Clinical Counsellor) & other VCH programs (i.e. Diabetic Programs)
Deprescribing	• Reassess ongoing need and benefit of medications • Offer monitoring and guidance through medication tapers • Provide culturally safe care to assist with addressing the barriers to discontinuation of medications
Polypharmacy Risk Reduction	• Reduce pill burden and regimen complexity • Eliminate unnecessary medication usage • Monitor for adverse events following discontinuation of a medication

VANCOUVER PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

Reason for referral	Examples
Care coordination	• Provide culturally safe care to assist with addressing the barriers related to cost of medication and subsequent adherence • Provide information regarding Provincial Health Benefits programs (e.g. education about Pharmacare plans, assess if patients are registered). • Referral to appropriate Health Care Professional for assistance with registration • Assist with Special Authority applications if appropriate, following pharmacist assessment • Review for more affordable alternatives to medications
Medication Reconciliation	• Ensure that medication are appropriately initiated or discontinued following hospital discharge or at other transitions of care • Assess ability to take medications as prescribed; advocate for support like blister-packing, daily dispense, or home care if needed • Review and reconcile medication changes following specialist consultation to ensure safety and alignment with the patient's overall care plan.
Patient education regarding medications, devices or supplements	• Engage patients in coping with new diagnoses, navigating treatment decisions, and chronic disease management • Spend the time required to provide patient-centered education to support medication decision-making • Advocacy in accessing resources (e.g. continuous glucose monitoring devices) • Referrals to other IPT members and community resources • Device teaching (inhalers, injections, patches, etc.)
Recent attachment to a new provider	• Arrange and coordinate required services and resources • Facilitate required interventions and referrals • Support continued client engagement in care • Assist client and team to create a care plan • Comprehensive medication review to develop a summary of immediate recommendations and long-term care plan

VANCOUVER PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

PCN Pharmacist Exclusion Criteria (in addition to overarching PCN IPT Program exclusion criteria):

- Referrals for medication assessment of a condition in the absence of a formal diagnosis of that condition are inappropriate. PCN pharmacists would not be able to assess medications for a condition, if the patient being referred does not have a formal diagnosis of that condition
 - E.g. A referral to discuss antidepressants with a patient who has not been diagnosed with depression.
 - List of conditions that pharmacists can make a diagnosis and prescribe medications for, under the Minor Ailments and Contraception Service (MACS):
<https://www.bcpharmacists.org/ppmac>
- While pharmacists are able to submit PharmaCare Special Authority forms, we would only do so if we are also able to assess the appropriateness of the medication.
- Pharmacists cannot register patients for PharmaCare Plans (including plan W (First Nations Health Benefits)), though we can offer support with information about BC PharmaCare and drug coverage.

Pharmacist Discharge Criteria

- All identified drug-therapy problems have been resolved or a plan is in place for Primary Care Provider to monitor and manage medications.
- Care plan is in place for patient to self-manage and monitor chronic diseases with Primary Care Provider.
- Patient can be re-referred back to PCN pharmacist if there is a change in condition or new issue requiring comprehensive medication review.