Competence Assessment Handbook

RxCEL
Competence Program

alberta college of
pharmacists

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This guide has been prepared by the Alberta College of Pharmacists to assist Alberta clinical pharmacists with their participation in the Competence Assessment branch of the RxCEL Competence Program.

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Be very thorough. Make learning goals specific and achievable. Continuous collection of data is easier than trying to piece information together just for the purpose of the portfolio. Keep an ongoing portfolio of presentations and update your CV as this will help when pulling information.

Professional Portfolio Pilot Participant

Preparing for the KA was a positive experience for me. The practice exams, the reviewing of resources, reviewing of other areas of pharmacy that I haven't been involved in for awhile..I am comfortable with the extra effort I put into preparing for the exam.

Knowledge Assessment Pilot Participant

I felt that these were all questions that any pharmacist should be able to find the answer to with the resources they have available.

Knowledge Assessment Pilot Participant

Again, this is better than CEUs will ever be, and allows for alternate learning and ways of documenting that learning and application to practice, over and above other assessments. Helps reflect my actual practice better.

Professional Portfolio Pilot Participant

The Professional Portfolio takes time to complete, but if you follow the steps it will likely not only show you are competent, but also help you improve your practice.

Professional Portfolio Pilot Participant

I would definitely tell [other pharmacists] that it is a fair assessment. If they properly assess a patient's prescription, condition and/or appropriately recommend OTC products in their practice everyday and keep up with their required CE units this assessment will be a true indication of their knowledge base.

Knowledge Assessment Pilot Participant

Introduction

This guide provides the information you need to prepare for competence assessment within the RxCEL Competence Program. All of the forms you need are either contained in the appendices of this handbook or referenced in this handbook.

We suggest you read over the information in this guide prior to choosing which competence assessment mechanism you will complete so you have a good understanding of the expectations. You will also find useful information in the Competence Assessment e-tutorial on the Continuing Competence section of the college website at pharmacists.ab.ca.

Should you not find the information you need in this guide or you require clarification, please consult the Continuing Competence section of the website or contact the Competence Department by telephone at **780.990.0321**, toll free at **1.877.227.3838**, or by **email at competenceinfo@pharmacists.ab.ca**.

You can also find the specifics of the RxCEL Competence Program detailed in the "RxCEL Competence Program Rules" on the Continuing Competence section of the website.

Background

The Alberta College of Pharmacists (ACP) is committed to supporting the ongoing competence of licensed pharmacists. The RxCEL Competence Program offers a number of tools to help pharmacists maintain and improve their knowledge and skills.

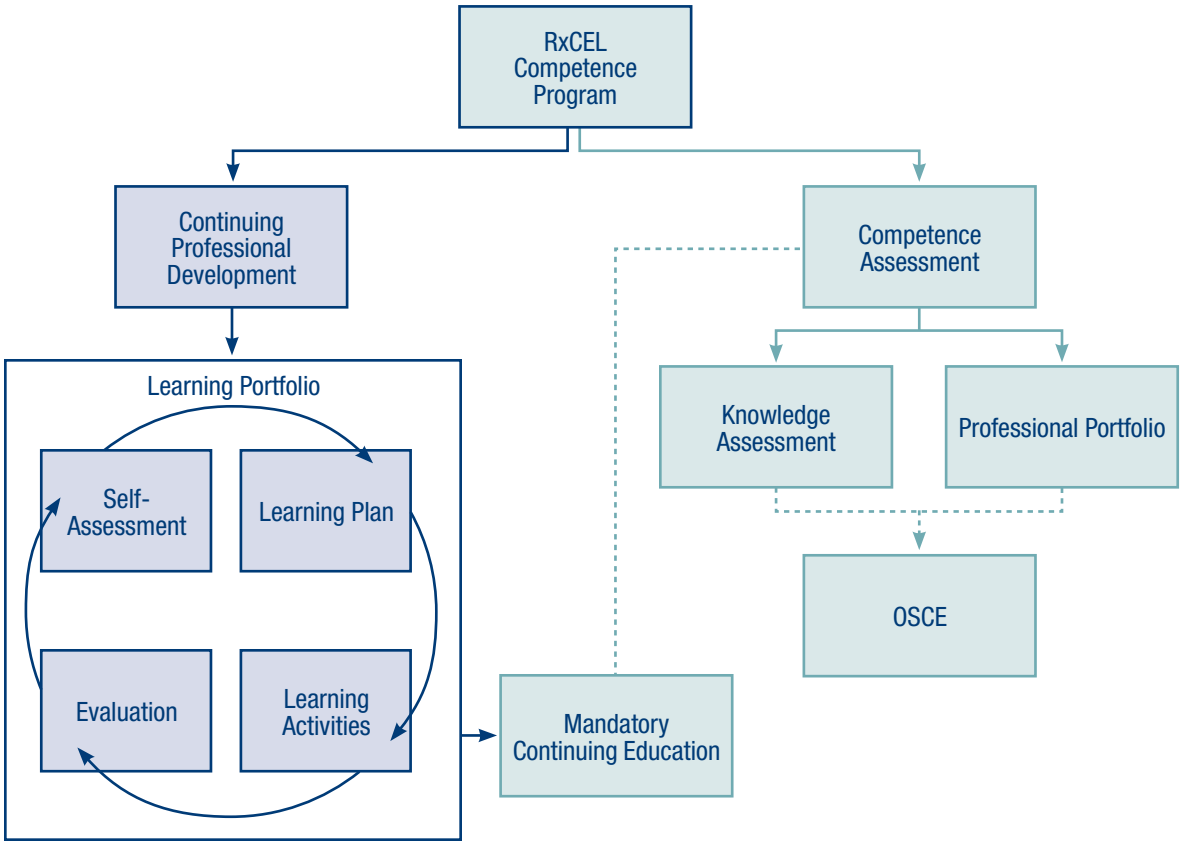

FIGURE 1 RxCEL Competence Program

Purpose

The RxCEL Competence Program supports Alberta pharmacists in the development and maintenance of knowledge, skills, and abilities for excellence in their pharmacy practice.

The competence program complements other initiatives that ACP administers to fulfill its mission of governing the pharmacy profession in Alberta to support and protect the public's health and well-being.

This is in keeping with the legislated mandate of health professions' continuing competence programs – "to maintain competence and to enhance the provision of professional services" (Health Professions Act).

According to the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), "Maintaining competence throughout a career, during which new and challenging professional responsibilities will be encountered, is a fundamental ethical requirement for all health professionals" (2002).

Competence means the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes, and judgment required to provide professional services (Health Professions Act).

FIGURE 2 Competence "Equation"
Adapted from Nimmo and Holland, ASHP, 1999

Principles

The RxCEL Competence Program embodies the following:

- fair and valid assessment mechanisms;
- transparent processes;
- tools that are applicable to all practice settings and the evolving role and scope of pharmacist practice so they are relevant to the individual pharmacist;
- confidentiality; and
- ongoing program review and enhancement.

Competence Assessment

In healthcare, the term *gold standard* refers to "practices that are accepted as the best and most effective for a particular problem, disease, or intervention" (Kak, Burkhalter, & Cooper, 2001). However, there is no gold standard for measuring competence. Various competence assessment methods exist, each measuring different competencies and each with different strengths and weaknesses. One competence assessment method cannot measure all competencies, nor can one competence assessment method adequately measure all aspects of an individual's competence.

ACP's competence assessment tools are designed to serve two purposes:

- to provide constructive feedback to help you develop your knowledge, skills and abilities; and
- to provide information to the college about registrants' individual and aggregate competence.

Competence assessment is not intended to be punitive, or to take pharmacists' licenses away from them. Competence assessment is intended to:

- provide the pharmacist with objective feedback about some aspects of his/her competence;
- complement the pharmacist's self-assessment;
- provide information to help guide the pharmacist's continuing professional development (CPD); and
- provide assurance to patients, government, and other health professionals that Alberta pharmacists are competent to perform their authorized roles.

The Professional Portfolio and the Knowledge Assessment are components of the RxCEL Competence Program, as shown in Figure 1 (p. 2). By providing the choice of the Professional Portfolio or the Knowledge Assessment, the college acknowledges that Alberta pharmacists work in diverse practices.

Since there is only one type of practicing license for Alberta pharmacists, any pharmacist on the clinical register may perform any and all of the restricted activities listed in the *Pharmacists Profession Regulations* (PPR) (except prescribing under s16(3) and s16(4) of the PPR and administration of drugs by injection). The competence assessment tools were developed to recognize and appreciate the diversity of pharmacists and their practices while ensuring that all pharmacists maintain their proficiency in core competencies.

The tools in the Competence Assessment side of the RxCEL Competence Program – the Knowledge Assessment and the Professional Portfolio – align with the tools in the Continuing Professional Development side of the program. Relevant and quality continuing professional development is the foundation for a professional's ongoing competence.

Developing a Professional Portfolio and participating in the Knowledge Assessment are excellent ways of demonstrating your commitment to your continuing professional development and your ongoing competence, and of receiving external feedback on the effectiveness of your CPD.

Selection for Competence Assessment

To fulfill its legislated and moral mandate, each year the college will randomly select a certain percentage of clinical pharmacists to undergo competence assessment. Eventually all clinical pharmacists will have been assessed and the cycle will repeat. This will provide assurance to government and to the public that the college is fulfilling its mission to govern the pharmacy profession in Alberta to support and protect the public's health and well-being.

Request for Deferral

The Competence Committee recognizes that there may be circumstances in which it is not reasonable or practical for an assessment to be conducted, such as if you are on a temporary leave of absence from active practice, like maternity or medical leave. **Living outside of Alberta is not justification for exemption from assessment.** Not currently practicing pharmacy is also not justification for deferral or exemption from assessment. You have chosen to hold a practice permit and thus are licensed to practice pharmacy in the province of Alberta.

Pharmacists who feel they cannot be assessed when selected for competence assessment may request a deferral.

Pharmacists excused from the assessment process because of an extenuating circumstance will be placed on a deferral list. Once they are able to undergo competence assessment, they will be slated for competence assessment.

Exemption from Systematic Competence Assessment

Pharmacists who have successfully completed the Ontario College of Pharmacists's (OCP) Quality Assurance assessment or the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia's (CPBC's) Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP) requirements within five years of selection for ACP competence assessment may apply for exemption. If you qualify for exemption you must submit a written application within 15 days of receipt of your notification of selection for competence assessment and submit evidence of successful completion.

COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT
Two Assessment Options

As stated earlier, the Competence Assessment section of the RxCEL Competence Program contains two assessment options to accommodate pharmacists' different practices and preferences. These options are **Knowledge Assessment** and **Professional Portfolio**.

With the exception of pharmacists with additional prescribing authorization, clinical pharmacists who are selected for competence assessment may select **either** of these assessment options.

The Professional Portfolio may be the preferred option for pharmacists who work in more specialized practices, such as anticoagulation clinics or cancer clinics. It may also be the preferred option for pharmacists who do not work in direct patient care.

All pharmacists with additional prescribing authorization must compile a Professional Portfolio when selected for competence assessment. This must include at least one Practice Enhancement Record focussing on the area of Patient Care Practice, and one piece of evidence for this Practice Enhancement Record must be a care plan. This will allow pharmacists to demonstrate that they are maintaining and enhancing the competencies that first gained them this authorization.

When you are selected for competence assessment you must choose your assessment option and notify the college of your choice within 60 days of being selected for competence assessment. In order to allow you to make an informed decision, the two assessment options are described in detail in the following pages.

Once you have selected your competence assessment option you may change your option **once** at no charge; each subsequent change will be subject to a fee to cover administrative costs. However, keep in mind that your deadline for completing the competence assessment remains the same; you do not get an extension if you request a change in assessment option.

You may request a change in your choice of competence assessment option by submitting a written request to the Competence Department along with the administration fee of $50.00 plus GST, if applicable.

Under the *Pharmaceutical Profession Regulation* (s32), you must meet the requirements of the continuing competence program in order to apply for renewal of your annual practice permit. Your practice permit **cannot** be renewed if you have not completed your competence assessment by the deadline.

The Knowledge Assessment Option

The Knowledge Assessment (KA) allows you and your fellow pharmacists to

- demonstrate that you continue to keep your knowledge, skills and abilities current;
- show that you can apply the knowledge and skills needed to solve drug therapy problems; and
- fulfill your continuing competence obligations under the *Health Professions Act*.

Preparing for the KA was a positive experience for me. The practice exams, the reviewing of resources, reviewing of other areas of pharmacy that I haven't been involved in for awhile...I am comfortable with extra effort I put into preparing for the exam.

Knowledge Assessment Pilot Participant

Format and Content of the KA

The Knowledge Assessment is an open-book, computer-based three hour assessment. It consists of up to 75 multiple choice questions. Each question requires you to select one **best** answer.

Each assessment follows the Knowledge Assessment Specifications (blueprint), provided in Appendix 1. You will want to review these specifications carefully as you prepare to take the assessment.

The KA focuses on the application of the knowledge and skills needed to solve drug therapy problems and provide direct patient care. The KA includes questions relating to foundational knowledge such as therapeutics, pharmaceutics, pharmacology, and pharmaceutical calculations, as well as drug distribution, pharmacy operations, and jurisprudence.

The *RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Plan* and the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists* outline very clearly the competencies that Alberta pharmacists hold and that may be included on the KA.

Computer-based Assessment

The Knowledge Assessment is computer-based. It is administered at proctored sites in multiple locations across Alberta. Examples of available locations include Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Peace River, St. Paul, Slave Lake, Cold Lake, High Prairie, Lac La Biche, and Swan Hills.

You will choose your assessment date, time and location from the available options by logging in through the ACP website after you have been selected for competence assessment and chosen the Knowledge Assessment as your preferred mechanism.

Types of questions

The Knowledge Assessment consists of only multiple choice questions. Each question has one best answer. The online assessment system will allow you to select just one response.

The questions may be stand alone or case scenarios that include sets of two to four questions that focus on a particular patient or practice situation. Relevant patient care record information is provided for all questions as appropriate.

References

The Knowledge Assessment is an open-book assessment. The recommended references are the most recent editions of

- *Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS),*
- *Therapeutic Choices,* and
- *Patient Self-Care. Helping Patients Make Therapeutic Choices.*

Since *CPS* and *Therapeutic Choices* are recommended references, the Alberta College of Pharmacists has arranged online access to *e-Therapeutics+* during your KA and there is no need to bring print copies of the *CPS* and *Therapeutic Choices* or a drug interactions text. ACP will also provide copies of *HPA Standards for Pharmacist Practice*, *PDA Standards for Operating Licensed Pharmacies*, and ACP's Record Retention Chart at the assessment centre for your reference.

You are allowed to bring up to **four** published, bound, printed references to the Knowledge Assessment. Any bound references that you find useful are acceptable. Since ACP is supplying online access to *e-Therapeutics+* you may not need to bring any of your own references to the KA. However, if you are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with the online format of *e-Therapeutics+* you may prefer to bring print references.

You may also bring your own reference sheets, study notes, etc.; however, **these sheets must be left with the proctor** when you have completed your assessment. For the purposes of assessment security you may not take any loose sheets from the assessment centre. Accessing electronic references or websites other than *e-Therapeutics+* is **not** permitted as this may pose a risk to security of the assessment.

You will not be allowed to share references during the assessment.

You will have an online calculator available to use during the assessment.

Writing the KA

What to bring to the assessment site

On the day of your Knowledge Assessment, make sure you have the following items with you:

- valid photo identification (driver's license, passport, provincial identity card issued by the Province of Alberta, or police identity card issued by the RCMP or a municipality);
- ACP practice permit;
- KA booking confirmation email;
- two or three pencils and/or pens;
- up to four published, bound, print references, if desired (see Appendix 2 for further details on references);
- your own reference sheets or study notes, if desired (these must be left at the exam centre after you have completed your assessment); and
- water in a spill-proof container (if needed).

Since it is and should be an 'open book' exam (no one can memorize all the information needed) there is no need for anxiety. When I started practice 40 years ago a seasoned pharmacist told me you do not need to know all the answers but you must be able to find the answers. That has served me well.

Knowledge Assessment Pilot Participant

What NOT to bring to the assessment site

- Recorders, electronic day timers, personal digital assistants, hand-held computers (e.g., iPad) or any other electronic devices;
- Cell phones (including "Smart phones" such as Blackberry, iPhone, or Palm);
- Portable storage devices (such as USB sticks);
- Listening devices (such as iPod or Zune);
- Cameras;
- Pagers; and
- Food or drinks other than water.

Any material that may compromise the administration and/or the security of the assessment, **including but not limited to those listed above**, must be left with

the proctor during the assessment and picked up upon leaving the assessment. Proctors and examination staff are not responsible for the security of the items.

Prior to your assessment date you **must** notify the Alberta College of Pharmacists in writing of any medical situation requiring special accommodation.

Registration and entry to the assessment

On the day of your assessment, you will

- show valid photo identification when you sign in at the assessment centre;
- read, electronically 'sign' and adhere to the "Participants' Agreement - Obligations and Rules of Conduct for Assessment Participants" prior to writing the assessment (included in the online assessment) (see Appendix 3); and
- sign in and sign out of the assessment centre.

Security and confidentiality

In order that all participants may have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and problem-solving abilities, the Alberta College of Pharmacists maintains the security of the content of the assessments before, during and after each assessment. Copyright law protects all assessment materials. Participants must sign and abide by the "Participants' Agreement - Obligations and Rules of Conduct for Knowledge Assessment Participants" (see Appendix 3), pertaining to the assessment materials and all other materials provided at the assessment.

Contravention of the copyright, obligations and/or rules of conduct for assessment participants and the Participants' Agreement declaration may be sufficient cause for the Competence Committee to invalidate the results of the assessment, withhold the results, or to take other action as deemed appropriate. A participant may be held responsible for all damages in the event that the assessment or any component of it is compromised by his/her actions, including but not limited to cost recovery for replacement of assessment items.

The Competence Director of the Alberta College of Pharmacists may refer any such matter to the Complaints Director. Serious breaches resulting in

substantial loss to the college or others may be referred to the Discipline Process and/or legal action taken to recover costs for damages.

Issues

If you have a concern about an unforeseen circumstance or a particular incident at the test site that may have adversely affected your performance in any way, you must report and document this on the Knowledge Assessment Questionnaire (Appendix 4) **before you leave** the assessment site. All Knowledge Assessment Questionnaires are reviewed and are considered in determining the outcome of your assessment.

If you wish to provide additional information relating to a matter reported on the Knowledge Assessment Questionnaire, please forward your comments in writing to the Competence Director, Alberta College of Pharmacists (email is acceptable; address to Roberta.Stasyk@pharmacists.ab.ca) within seven calendar days of the assessment date, accompanied by supporting documentation. A response to your concern will be made in writing.

After the Assessment

Feedback

After the results of the assessment have been psychometrically analyzed and reviewed by the Knowledge Assessment Panel you will receive a feedback report that will include

- a statement indicating whether or not you met the established standard, and
- a report indicating the topic areas where you met the standard and those where you did not meet the standard.

You will **not** be advised of your performance on individual questions as that could jeopardize security of the assessment questions. You will not receive a numeric score report.

The feedback report will enable you to determine your areas of strength and any gaps in your knowledge. As part of the continuing professional development cycle, this information will help you to modify your current continuing professional development plan or develop a new one. It will also enable you to

think about how you practice and how your practice and/or patient outcomes might be improved.

If you do not achieve the overall minimum standard you will have another opportunity to complete the Competence Assessment. You may choose the same Competence Assessment method or a different method.

According to the RxCEL Competence Program Rules, pharmacists who are not successful in their second Competence Assessment attempt will be directed to undergo an OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination).

Your reports are strictly confidential and will not be provided to anyone other than you.

Knowledge Assessment Standards

The KA standard was established using internationally accepted standard-setting procedures.

It is "criterion-based" and not "norm-referenced based". "Norm-referenced" standards are often known as the "bell-curve", where participants' results are compared to each other and a certain percentage of participants will fail regardless of how well they perform. "Criterion-based" standards are based on one minimum standard and each participant must meet that standard; participants' results are not compared to each other and potentially all participants can meet the standard.

Developing the Knowledge Assessment Questions

The questions in the Knowledge Assessment have been developed by practicing pharmacists from a wide variety of patient care settings, who have been trained to write appropriate analytical test questions following internationally accepted guidelines and standards. Pharmacists have prepared the questions based on their own clinical experiences and in keeping with the KA Specifications (blueprint). These questions have been extensively reviewed, refined and verified.

The answer to each clinical question on the KA is based on evidence; it is not based on a particular practitioner's clinical judgment or experience.

Tips for Taking the Knowledge Assessment

Most people are a little anxious before an exam. However, you can reduce your anxiety in a number of ways.

1. Preparing for the Knowledge Assessment

Preparing for the KA means learning as much about the assessment and yourself as you can. This means you should do the following:

- Complete and review your self-assessment in your personal continuing professional development plan and/or review the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists* (available on the ACP website at Continuing Competence/ Competency Profile).
- Review and compare the Knowledge Assessment Specifications (blueprint) (see Appendix 1) to what you know of your own knowledge and skills.
- Make sure you understand the format and types of questions found on the KA.
- Familiarize yourself with the organization and content of the online reference e-Therapeutics+ so you can access information quickly and easily during the exam.

  NOTE: ACP has purchased subscriptions for Knowledge Assessment candidates only for the day of the Knowledge Assessment. If you need to practice using e-Therapeutics+ prior to the day of your KA you will have to arrange access yourself.

2. Practicing

Use the sample questions in the online Knowledge Assessment Practice Quiz (http://acppractice.proexams.com) to get an idea of the types of questions you can expect on the assessment. You may also find it helpful to work with colleagues by developing mock questions, discussing specific disease state topics, exploring specific types of problems and/or exploring specific types of questions.

Keep in mind that the Practice Quiz may be perceived by individual pharmacists as more or less difficult than a particular Knowledge Assessment.

Remember that studying means more than simply underlining words in a textbook. For the KA, you will need to be able to apply your knowledge and skills, make sound practice decisions, and be familiar with a wide range of practice areas, whether or not you currently work in these areas.

Also be sure to practice using all the features of the online assessment system, including things you may not be familiar with, such as bookmarks. The system tutorial is available at http://acppractice.proexams.com.

You are strongly encouraged to make use of the system tutorial so you are familiar with the online assessment system before you do your Knowledge Assessment. Being familiar with the technology will ensure that you are able to show your true capabilities.

3. **Organizing your thoughts and materials**

   If you are like most pharmacists, you will feel more confident about the assessment if you are well prepared and well organized. Being organized includes developing a clear, targeted study or professional development plan in the months and weeks leading up to the assessment and keeping to it so you can address any gaps in your knowledge or skills.

4. **Reducing anxiety on the day of the Knowledge Assessment**

   On the day of the assessment, arrive at the site a bit early so you know where to park and how to locate the exam room and restrooms. The night before the assessment, try to get a good night's sleep and eat and drink something before arriving to take the assessment.

5. **Following the test-taking tips suggested below**

   - When you arrive at the computer workstation assigned to you for the assessment get settled and organize your materials – reference books, pens/pencils, watch, water, etc.
   - Be sure that there is a copy of the "Knowledge Assessment Questionnaire" at your workstation.
   - Before the KA begins, listen carefully to the proctor's instructions.
   - When the proctor announces that you may begin, logon to your assessment on the computer assigned to you.
   - Log on to *e-Therapeutics+*.
   - Notify the proctor immediately if you have any problems logging on to the KA or *e-Therapeutics+*.
   - Read the instructions at the beginning of the assessment.
   - Estimate the time needed for individual questions or pages. Remember that you have three hours to answer 70 questions or about 23 questions per hour.
     - Monitor your time accordingly. There is a clock on the left top corner of the webpage; it will count down the time remaining. (You can hide the clock during your assessment

if you find it distracting. You can practice this when you do the system tutorial.)

- Be sure to allocate enough time to answer all parts of the assessment.

- Read through and answer as many questions as you can without using references.
  - Answer each question to yourself before you look at the possible answers.
  - Choose the option that best answers the question or is closest to your response.
  - If you are quite confident of your answer select the appropriate statement and click “Submit Answer”. If you are not confident bookmark the question so you can come back to it later – your assessment is not submitted for grading until you click “END” or the three hour time limit is reached.
- Don’t stay too long on any one question. Bookmark the questions that you cannot answer or are unsure about; move on to another question and return later to the more difficult questions or those for which you need to check references.
  - Review and check references for the difficult questions after going through all questions the first time. Once you find the information you need, select the best response and submit your answer. Do not spend time in other references unless you have finished and there is time to spare.
  - If you decide to change your answer to a question, just click the answer you now wish to select and click “Submit Answer”. Your previous selection will be overwritten by this new answer.
  - Once you have answered all the questions check the time remaining on the assessment clock. If you have time, you may review your answers.
  - Record any problematic questions, errors or incidents on your “Knowledge Assessment Questionnaire”.
  - For the purposes of scoring the KA, all answers submitted will be considered the participant’s choice. All answers must be submitted within the three hour allotted time. Once you have finished click “END”. When the allotted three hour time period is over the exam will end and you will be logged out.

COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT
The Professional Portfolio Option

The Professional Portfolio option for competence assessment is a different 'philosophy' than Knowledge Assessment for competence assessment. The Professional Portfolio does not ask you to demonstrate your competence as such, but rather to demonstrate how you **maintain** and **enhance** your competence in your own practice.

Continuing professional development is the foundation of the entire RxCEL Competence Program. The *RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Plan* (available online on the ACP website through "Registrant Profile Login") provides you with tools to effectively manage your continuing professional development and thus maintain and enhance your competence throughout your professional career. The plan includes tools for

- self-assessment,
- developing a learning plan,
- documenting your learning, and
- evaluating your learning.

The results of your self-assessment serve as the foundation of your Professional Portfolio. Developing, implementing and evaluating your learning plan allows you to follow through on the results of your self-assessment. But continuing professional development is not sufficient to ensure ongoing competence – one must take that learning and implement it into practice. The Professional Portfolio allows you to demonstrate to the college that you are using your continuing professional development to enhance your practice.

Through the Professional Portfolio you demonstrate to the college that you are able to and do

- identify the gaps and weaknesses in your competencies,
- develop learning plans to address those gaps,
- follow through on those learning plans, and
- implement your learning and enhance your practice.

The Professional Portfolio enables you and your fellow pharmacists to

- engage in all components of the continuing professional development cycle, including documentation;

If you want to expand your scope of practice then the professional portfolio is the beginning of how to do that and the means to continue doing that.

Professional Portfolio Pilot Participant

- demonstrate that you continue to keep your knowledge, skills and abilities current through planned continuing professional development;
- show that you can transfer your knowledge to improve your practice; and
- fulfill your continuing competence obligations under the Health Professions Act.

Developing the Format of the Professional Portfolio

The Professional Portfolio is based on the *RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Plan* and the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists*. The Professional Portfolio takes the Continuing Professional Development Plan further, to your practice. The Practice Enhancement Record asks you to explain how you have implemented the learnings from your continuing professional development activities into your practice and then support that explanation with actual evidence.

What is a Professional Portfolio?

- "A portfolio is a collection of evidence, usually in written form, of both the products and processes of learning. It attests to achievement and personal and professional development, by providing critical analysis of its contents" (McMullan et al, 2003, p. 288).
- "A private collection of evidence, which demonstrates the continuing acquisition of skills, knowledge, attitudes, understanding and achievements. It is both retrospective and prospective, as well as reflecting the current stage of development and activity of the individual" (Brown, as cited in McMullan et al, 2003, p. 288).
- "The strength of portfolios derives from their ability to offer rich and authentic evidence of learners' development and achievements…Portfolios afford insight into learners' clinical competence through authentic evidential materials collected by learners in day-to-day practice over a prolonged period of time" (Driessen, Overeem, van Tartwijk, Van der Vleuten & Muijtjens, 2006).

Overview

Developing your Professional Portfolio will be simple if you follow the four steps outlined on the Professional Portfolio Cover Sheet to identify areas of your competence and practice that you would like or need to work on. It will be even easier if you have already been systemically planning your continuing professional development, implementing that plan, and evaluating your learning.

Undertake the continuing professional development cycle

FIGURE 3 Continuing Professional Development Cycle

Develop your Professional Portfolio

Select at least three learning projects that you have completed and implemented in your pharmacy practice, or that you will complete by the due date, to write up as evidence of your continuing competence. Complete a Practice Enhancement Record for each of the three learning projects.

tip The terminology may seem confusing. Remember – you are reporting to the college on how you have enhanced your practice. You submit that information on a **Practice Enhancement Record**. In order to enhance your practice you undertook **learning projects** through the continuing professional development cycle.

Select only those learning projects for which you have evidence of implementation into your practice. Each learning project must be completed no more than 24 months prior to the date of submission of your Professional Portfolio.

Compile your Professional Portfolio

For each learning project, compile evidence of implementation of your enhanced or new knowledge/skills/abilities into your pharmacy practice.

Submit TWO copies of your Professional Portfolio to the college for assessment.

Preparing Your Portfolio

Getting Started

It's a good idea to review this handbook in its entirety to visualize the entire process before beginning to fill out any forms or gather information.

A pharmacist's Professional Portfolio will contain the following:

1. Information about the pharmacist on the **Professional Portfolio Cover Sheet** (Appendix 6)
   - name, registration number, address
   - description of pharmacist's current practice
   - date of submission of Professional Portfolio
2. Description of three learning projects documented on the **Practice Enhancement Record** (Appendix 7)

   Each learning project consists of a specific learning objective, documentation of undertaking learning activities, evaluation of learning, implementation in practice, and impact on patient care.

   These three learning projects must describe learning undertaken in the following domains:
   - patient care (i.e., Competency Area A), including but not limited to Patient Care Practice (i.e., Competency A-1)
   - medical knowledge, e.g., disease state management, pharmacokinetics, pharmacotherapy
   - systems based practice, e.g., interprofessional collaboration, safety

The Professional Portfolio Cover Sheet and Practice Enhancement Record can be found on the ACP website under Continuing Competence/ Competence Assessment - https://pharmacists.ab.ca/nContinuingCompetence/CompetenceAssessment.aspx

- communication skills
- professionalism
- managing drug distribution
- applying management principles
- drug information
- education
- research
- continuing professional development

At least one learning project **must relate to ONE of the following competency areas** (refer to the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists*):

- pharmacy practice (i.e., Competency Area A), including but not limited to Patient Care Practice (i.e., Competency A-1)
- medical knowledge, e.g., Disease States, Pharmacotherapy, Pharmacokinetics, (i.e., relevant competencies from Competency Areas A and F)
- systems based practice, e.g., Professional Practice (i.e., Competency E-2), Interprofessional Collaboration (i.e., Competency B-4), and Patient Safety (i.e., Competency C-1).

The other two learning projects may relate to the three competency areas listed above or to the following competency areas:

- research (i.e., Competency A-8-7)
- drug information (i.e., Competency A-11)
- managing drug distribution (i.e., Competencies A-12 and A-13)
- communication skills (i.e., Competency Area B)
- education (i.e., Competency B-3)
- safety (i.e., Competency Area C)
- operational and business management (i.e., Competency Area D)
- professionalism (i.e., Competency Area E)
- continuing professional development (i.e., Competency E-5)

You can find more information on specific competencies included in these domains in the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists* on the ACP website

under Continuing Competence / Competency Profile (https://pharmacists.ab.ca/Content_Files/Files/CompProfile2010.pdf). These competency statements may help you develop a specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based (SMART) learning objective for your Practice Enhancement Record.

How to Develop Your Professional Portfolio

It is important to recognize that it will take time to develop your Professional Portfolio. This is not something you will pull together in a weekend. You must plan and undertake learning to address an identified learning need, evaluate your learning, incorporate the learning into your practice, and reflect on how your learning has made a difference to patients.

Prior to this [the Professional Portfolio] it was tough for me to identify areas to target. Not anymore.

Professional Portfolio Pilot Participant

PART 1: Undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Your RxCEL Competence Program Continuing Professional Development Plan is the foundation of your Professional Portfolio. If you are unsure of how to develop your personal continuing professional development plan you may want to complete Continuing Pharmacy Education's print course titled *RxCEL Continuing Professional Development – Expanding Opportunities for Professional Development*. Please contact the Competence Department at the college for a copy of this course. (This course is now expired and no longer eligible for accredited CEUs. However, it is still a valuable source of information regarding developing your Continuing Professional Development Plan.)

The continuing professional development cycle consists of four main tasks:

1. performing a self-assessment,
2. creating a learning plan,
3. undertaking learning activities, and
4. evaluating the entire process.

Continuing professional development is an ongoing process, and the CPD cycle is also ongoing, as shown in Figure 4. Each step in the process leads to another, including evaluation, which then provides information for the next self-assessment. There is no point where learning stops or becomes unnecessary.

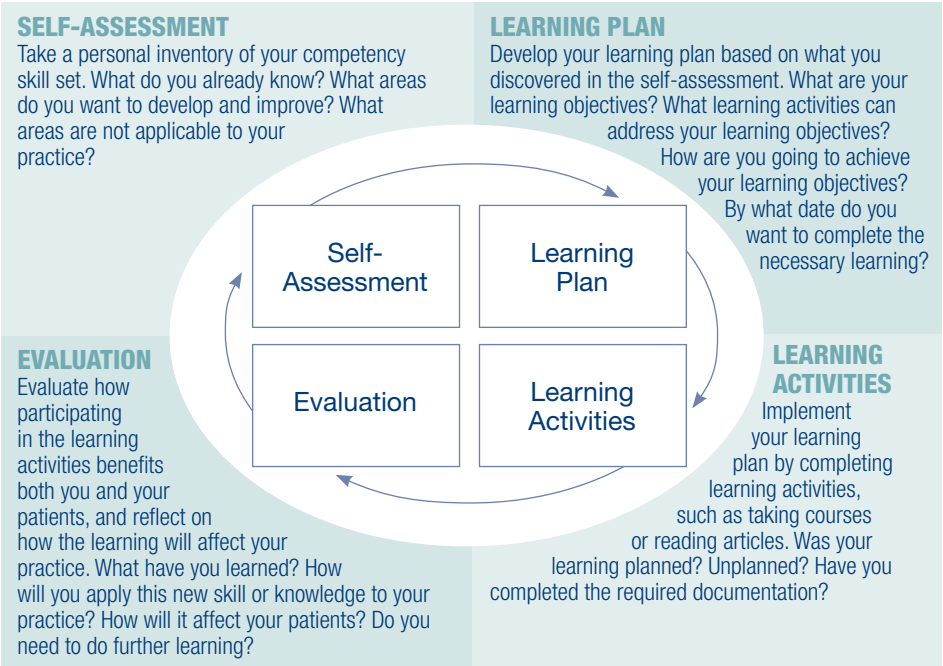

FIGURE 4 Continuing Professional Development Cycle
Reprinted from Expanding Opportunities for Professional Development: The Learning Portfolio, *Continuing Pharmacy Education*

1 Self-Assessment

You may choose to complete the entire self-assessment within the RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Plan (available on the ACP website through Registant Profile login) or you may select areas that are especially relevant to your practice or areas that you know you want or need to develop. Take a personal inventory of your competency skill set. What do you already know? What areas do you want to develop and improve? What areas are not applicable to your practice?

- You may wish to get some feedback from others as part of your self-assessment. Feedback from supervisors or managers, peers, patients, and other members of the health care team can help you see areas that you need to work on that you may not be aware of.
- You may also gather information about how you might enhance your practice by reflecting on how you managed a patient or a practice situation, by discussing pharmacy practice with peers or others, by scanning the literature, and by engaging in teaching, writing, research or a CE program.

- Note that while self-assessment is a critical part of the continuing professional development cycle you will **not** submit your self-assessment to ACP as part of your Professional Portfolio; your self-assessment is always confidential.

Now that you have reflected on your competencies and your practice, identify how you want to enhance your practice. What measurable impact/change/outcome do you hope to make in your practice? What impact do you anticipate this will have on patients and/or provision of patient care (even if it is indirect)?

2 Developing Your Learning Plan

Develop your learning plan based on what you discovered through reflecting on your practice and your competencies. What specific knowledge/skills/abilities do you need to gain or enhance?

What are your learning objectives? What learning activities can address your learning objectives? How are you going to achieve your learning objectives? By what date do you want to complete the necessary learning? Be sure to write your learning objective in the SMART format so both you and the assessor of your Professional Portfolio will know that you have achieved your objective.

tip It is important to state your learning objective in the SMART format. It will help you achieve your learning objective and confirm that you have achieved it. The SMART format will also enable assessors to assess whether you have achieved your learning objective when they review your portfolio.

The SMART format

Specific	Specific means the objective is concrete and uses action verbs. An observable action, behaviour, or achievement is described.
Measurable	Measurable means the objective has a quantity, quality, cost, or something that can be measured.
Attainable	Attainable means the objective is feasible and has a scope or boundary. You should be able to achieve the objective with the resources available to you and with a reasonable amount of effort.
Relevant	Relevant means the objective addresses something that is important to you and your practice, something that you can change or affect.
Time-based	Time-based means the objective has a target date to be completed.

Use action verbs such as accept, adapt, advocate, alter, analyze, apply, combine, conduct, control, define, describe, design, detect, identify, list, perform, and watch.

Avoid vague terms such as appreciate, be aware of, comprehend, enjoy, know, know how, learn, practice, rehearse, think about, and understand, as it will be difficult to provide evidence that you have achieved this learning objective. For example, how will you show the assessor that you understand the pharmacokinetics of gentamicin?

Reprinted from Expanding Opportunities for Professional Development: The Learning Portfolio*, Continuing Pharmacy Education.*

Here is an example of a SMART learning objective (modified from Continuing Pharmacy Education's course "Expanding Opportunities for Professional Development: The Learning Portfolio)".

By January 2012, develop a one-page handout that states target BPs for specific patient groups in my practice, including patients with diabetes, renal disease, and non-diabetic renal disease, according to the latest guidelines.

SPECIFIC = develop a one-page handout
MEASURABLE = I will have produced a handout
ATTAINABLE = I believe that I can attain this using the latest guidelines
RELEVANT = This is very relevant to my practice as achieving target BP is an important objective for these patients. A handout listing target BPs will facilitate my discussions with my patients.
TIME-BASED = by January 2012

Here are two examples of learning objectives that are not SMART.

Learn more about diabetes (or hypertension, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, etc.).

SPECIFIC = no
MEASURABLE = no; how will you or the assessors know if you have achieved this?
ATTAINABLE = maybe
RELEVANT = probably
TIME-BASED = no

Understand HIV and its treatments (or any other disease and its therapies).

SPECIFIC = no
MEASURABLE = no; how will you or the assessors know if you have achieved this?
ATTAINABLE = probably not; can you really **understand** HIV and its treatments?
RELEVANT = probably
TIME-BASED = no

3 Undertake Learning Activities

Implement your learning plan by completing learning activities, such as taking courses or reading articles. You will probably have to go beyond traditional continuing pharmacy education courses to achieve your entire learning objective. Perhaps you need to seek out a mentor or undertake an internet search for relevant, current, evidence-based information. Perhaps you have to look at learning opportunities outside of the world of pharmacy, such as courses in communication, instructional design, or leadership. But always remember that the learning must be relevant to your pharmacy practice.

Once you have undertaken learning activities complete the required documentation. Remember – documentation is a critical component of your Professional Portfolio.

4 Evaluation

Evaluate how participating in the learning activities benefits both you and your patients, and reflect on how the learning will affect your practice. What have you learned? How will you apply this new skill or knowledge to your practice? How will it affect your patients? Do you need to do further learning?

Participation in continuing professional development is not sufficient to ensure continuing competence. Therefore your Professional Portfolio will include evidence not only of your continuing professional development, but how you have incorporated new and enhanced competencies into your practice and how they impact patient care, either on an individual level, a systems level or a higher level, such as provincially or nationally.

PART 2: Practice Enhancement Records

You will probably use your RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Plan to plan your continuing professional development. However, you will not submit your Continuing Professional Development Plan to the college as part of your Professional Portfolio.

The Professional Portfolio that you submit to the college for competence assessment will include documentation of the learning projects you have completed. Therefore, you will document each of the three learning projects you are submitting to the college on a **Practice Enhancement Record** (see a sample

in Appendix 7 but download the form at https://pharmacists.ab.ca/Content_Files/Files/PracticeEnhancementRecord-July16.doc).

Much of the information for your Practice Enhancement Record will be transferred from your Continuing Professional Development Plan as described in Part 1.

Following is a description of the Practice Enhancement Record. You'll notice that this overview references steps described above. That's because the Practice Enhancement Record documents the processes you have already undertaken to enhance your practice.

You'll find that the Practice Enhancement Record walks you through documenting all the steps of the learning project.

1 Plan to enhance your practice

1A Reflect on your practice

1B Define how you want to improve your practice

1C Plan your learning

- Define your learning objective in the SMART format.
- Link your learning objective to a competency domain (described in the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists*). Remember that at least one learning project must relate to the domain of patient care, medical knowledge or systems-based practice.
- Define the learning objective(s) through which you will gain or enhance the knowledge/skills /abilities to achieve this improvement or change in your practice.

2 Work to enhance your practice

- Describe the learning activities you undertook in order to achieve your learning objective. Be sure to include specifics of your learning, such as references read, experts or colleagues you have discussed the issue with, names of courses you have taken, or the name of the preceptor or mentor you have worked with. If you did a literature search be specific – what were your search terms, what databases did you search, etc.?

3 Evaluate your practice enhancement

3A Evaluate your learning.

- The questions on the Practice Enhancement Record will help guide your evaluation. What new learning or development of skills has occurred?

3B Evaluate implementation.

- Describe how you have implemented your learnings into your practice.

3C Evaluate achievement.

- Consider the impact of your learning on patient care. The impact on patient care may occur at the individual patient level, at a systems level (e.g., your pharmacy, your hospital, your health region) or at a higher level such as provincially or nationally.

4 Provide evidence of outcome

Provide evidence that supports your achievement of practice enhancement. This evidence allows you to demonstrate to the college how continuing professional development has helped you maintain and enhance your competence.

You must include at least TWO pieces of evidence for each Practice Enhancement Record, one of which must be direct evidence.

Direct evidence is documentation of enhancement of your practice produced as a direct result of the work you have done related to the practice enhancement you planned.

What is "Evidence"?

Put yourself in the assessors' shoes. How will they know that your learning improved your competencies and enhanced your practice?

"**Direct evidence**" can be anything that is produced by **you** or is the direct result of your own work. Examples include:

- Work samples, e.g., copies of chart notes, records, or patient interventions
- Notes from a clinic you facilitated
- An information brochure you developed

- A copy of a recent presentation you gave
- A paper or article you authored that was accepted for publication
- A course you developed.

There are many other examples of direct evidence. The ones listed above are provided for illustrative purposes only.

"**Indirect evidence**" can be anything that **others have produced** that describes or verifies your work. Examples include:

- A recent performance appraisal
- Letters from supervisors or colleagues
- Feedback from clients or patients
- Articles about you and your work.

Examples of documentation that are **not** considered evidence of your practice enhancement efforts include items such as:

- Company or other organization-produced patient information pamphlets
- Programs developed by your employer with no direct input from you
- A list or copies of journal articles or website information you read. (On its own, merely reading articles does not mean you learned anything and certainly does not mean you have enhanced your practice. However, you are encouraged to document the reading you have done as part of your learning and demonstrate how this learning was integrated into your practice.)

Each piece of evidence must also meet three technical requirements. It must be:

- **Valid:** This means it must be clearly relevant to the activities you completed and to the learning objectives you described in Step 1C.
- **Authentic:** This means it must clearly reflect work that you performed. This is particularly important when you submit something that may have been produced by a team. In your explanation in Step 4 you should describe your exact contribution or role so that the assessors can review your evidence with that understanding.
- **Current:** This means that it must reflect learning experiences and/or practice or client outcomes achieved within two years of the date of the submission of your Professional Portfolio.

tip Make sure you clearly number your documentation/ evidence as pertaining to Practice Enhancement Record #1, #2 or #3.

Do NOT submit certificates of course completion or course transcripts. These should remain in your RxCEL Learning Portfolio. Certificates of course completion are merely that – confirmation that you have completed a course. Certificates do not confirm that you learned anything or that you have implemented your learnings into practice.

Ensuring Confidentiality

Make sure that you remove all names of clients, prescribers, colleagues or others used in your documentation/evidence or elsewhere in your Professional Portfolio. You may replace them with initials, prescription number, transaction number, etc. You may use people's names only if they appear in public places such as in newspaper articles, on letterhead or in publications, or if you have received their permission to share their names.

Compile your Professional Portfolio

You must submit two copies of your Professional Portfolio so that it is available for two assessors to review. That means you will submit two full sets of the following:

- your completed RxCEL Professional Portfolio cover sheet (Appendix 6),
- three (3) individual Practice Enhancement Records (Appendix 7), and
- two pieces of evidence for each Practice Enhancement Record.

The Professional Portfolio Cover Sheet and Practice Enhancement Record can be found on the ACP website under Continuing Competence/Competence Assessment - https://pharmacists.ab.ca/nContinuingCompetence/CompetenceAssessment.aspx

Declaration

The last section of the application form provides a space for you to sign and date the form when it is complete. In doing this, you are verifying that the information you have provided in your application is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.

Submit Your Professional Portfolio to the College

Now that you have completed your portfolio and gathered all the relevant documents, you are ready to submit these to the college for assessment. **Please note that the college will NOT return your submission to you after it has been assessed**. Your submission will be retained at the college as proof of your participation in the Competence Assessment portion of the RxCEL Competence Program. You may wish to make a copy of your submission for your own records.

Following is a final checklist that you can use to make sure you have included all of the necessary information and documentation, and that your submission is complete.

The assessors will be reviewing your portfolio and looking for evidence that your continuing professional development activities are related to competencies relevant to your pharmacy practice (i.e., are included in the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists*), have been transferred to your practice and have been used to enhance your practice. Therefore they will be evaluating whether

- your learning objectives are related to competencies defined in the *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists*;
- your stated learning objectives are related to your desired practice enhancement;
- the learning activities you undertook were relevant to your stated learning objectives;
- you have described how your new knowledge, skills or abilities have improved your practice and/or client outcomes;
- the evidence you have provided is valid and authentic and proves that you achieved your desired practice enhancements; and
- the documentation you have provided confirms or verifies improved practice and/or client outcomes.

Checklist

- ◯ Professional Portfolio Cover Sheet
- ◯ Three individual Practice Enhancement Records (do not submit more than three Practice Enhancement Records)
- ◯ Documentation for the Practice Enhancement Records
  - ◯ Have you included at least two pieces of evidence, of which at least one piece is "direct evidence"?
  - ◯ Have you numbered your documentation so that it can be easily and clearly referred to in the specific Practice Enhancement Record?
  - ◯ Is your documentation:
    - ◯ **Valid:** This means it must be clearly relevant to the learning objective.
    - ◯ **Authentic:** This means it must clearly reflect work that **you** performed.
    - ◯ **Current:** This means that it must be no older than two years from the date of submission of your Professional Portfolio.

Mail both sets of your Professional Portfolio to the following address:

Alberta College of Pharmacists
Attention: Competence Department
1200, 10303 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 3N6

What Happens Next

Assessment

ACP staff will first review your Professional Portfolio for completeness. Your portfolio will then be forwarded to one or more assessors for assessment. A pool of assessors encompassing a cross-section of pharmacist experience and practice has been specially trained for this process. All assessors are practicing pharmacists in Alberta with at least three (3) years of experience. They undergo intensive training in conducting objective, criterion-referenced assessments.

Standard

The standard for the Professional Portfolio is established using internationally accepted standard-setting procedures.

It is “criterion-based” and not “norm-referenced based”. “Norm-referenced” standards are often known as the “bell-curve”, where participants’ results are compared to each other and a certain percentage of participants will fail regardless of how well they perform. “Criterion-based” standards are based on one minimum standard and each participant must meet that standard; participants’ results are not compared to each other and potentially all participants can meet the standard.

Feedback

After the results of the assessment have been psychometrically analyzed and reviewed by the Competence Committee you will receive a feedback report that will include:

- a statement indicating whether or not you met the standard, and
- feedback from the assessors relating to your Practice Enhancement Records.

You will not receive a numeric score report.

Your reports are strictly confidential and will not be provided to anyone other than you.

You can use the feedback on your Professional Portfolio in much the same way you used the information in your self-assessment - reflect on what you did well and what could have been better and begin planning more continuing professional development.

If you do not achieve the overall minimum standard you will have another opportunity to complete the Competence Assessment. You may choose the same competence assessment method or a different method.

According to the RxCEL Competence Program Rules, pharmacists who are not successful in their second Competence Assessment attempt will be directed to undergo an OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination).

Frequently Asked Questions

Q I'm not working in a pharmacy. Can I be excused from competence assessment?

A No. If you hold a practicing license you are subject to competence assessment. There is only one type of practicing license in Alberta and as such every pharmacist who holds a practice permit must fulfill all requirements of the RxCEL Competence Program.

Q I'm not living in Alberta right now. Can I be excused from competence assessment?

A No. If you hold a practicing license in Alberta, regardless of where you are living, you are subject to competence assessment. Every pharmacist who holds an ACP practice permit must fulfill all requirements of the RxCEL Competence Program.

There are Knowledge Assessment sites in towns and cities across Canada. Contact the Competence Department to make arrangements to write your Knowledge Assessment at a location near you. The Professional Portfolio is always an option as it is submitted to ACP by mail.

Q What happens if I don't 'pass' my assessment? Will the college take my license away?

A No. Competence Assessment is not punitive and is not set up to "take pharmacists' licenses away." If you do not meet the established standard on your first attempt you get a second opportunity. On your second attempt you may choose the same assessment mechanism as your first attempt or you may decide to choose the alternative mechanism. For example, you may decide that you are the type of person who doesn't do well on computer-based exams and you want to compile a Professional Portfolio for your second attempt. Or you may decide that you didn't prepare properly for the Knowledge Assessment the first time and you are going to prepare differently the second time. According to the RxCEL Competence Program Rules, pharmacists who are not successful in their second Competence Assessment attempt will be directed to undergo an OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination).

Q I've read through this entire handbook and I'm very confused. What should I do?

A First, go to the Continuing Competence section of the ACP website and check out the resources available there. If you're still confused or unsure call a member of the Competence Department at ACP at 780.990.0321, toll-free 1.877.227.3838, or email competenceinfo@pharmacists.ab.ca.

Q I applied for and was granted authorization for additional prescribing. Now I've been selected for Competence Assessment. To me it looks like the Professional Portfolio is very similar to the application for Additional Prescribing Authorization I submitted. What's the difference?

A Good point! In fact, the Professional Portfolio was deliberately modelled on the application for Additional Prescribing Authorization. But they are not the same thing. Yes, you are submitting three Practice Enhancement Records and you are asked to provide evidence. But this time you are demonstrating how you plan to maintain and enhance your competence, not how you provide patient care.

Q Do you have some examples of Practice Enhancement Records?

A Yes! Go to the Continuing Competence section of the ACP website and check out the resources available there.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1
Knowledge Assessment Specifications (Blueprint)

This Knowledge Assessment (KA) Blueprint was developed by the Knowledge Assessment Panel as the basis for composing the KA questions and preparing each KA "form".

The KA Blueprint includes the content "domains" and additional details regarding the Therapeutics and Pharmaceutical Care domain. The percent weightings show the relative emphasis of each component on the KA. Some domains do not have percent weightings but are integrated to a greater or lesser extent depending on their perceived frequency or criticality in typical pharmacy practice. These are denoted by the designation "more important" (three check marks ✓✓✓), "somewhat important" (two check marks ✓✓), and "less important" (one check mark ✓).

A. Foundation Sciences	**75%**
a. Pharmacology	22%
b. Pharmaceutics • Compounding • Calculations and measurements • Dose per body weight • Dose equivalency • Dilutions • IV concentration, administration rate	8%
c. Therapeutics and Pharmaceutical Care (refer to detailed document on next page) • Drug therapy problems • Non-drug problems • Special needs, e.g., pregnancy, lactation, ostomy • Impact of age and gender	45%
B. Pharmacy Systems	**5%**
• Pharmacy operations (refer to Competency A-12[1], A-13[1], A-14[1]) • Business Management (refer to Competency Area D[1])	
C. Health and Safety (refer to Competency Area C[1])	**5%**
• Patient safety • Medication error management • Occupational health and safety • Storage and disposal • Workplace security practices	
D. Communication (refer to Competency Area B[1])	**5%**
E. Professional Practice and Accountability (refer to Competency Area E[1])	**10%**
• Standards of Practice • Federal and provincial legislation	

[1] *Competency Profile for Alberta Pharmacists*

Infectious Diseases	
✓✓✓	UTI
	Respiratory Infections
✓✓✓	• Pneumonia
✓✓	• Sinusitis
✓✓	• Bronchitis
✓	• Pleuritis
✓✓✓	• Cough/colds
✓	• Tuberculosis
✓✓✓	Otitis Media
✓✓	Ophthalmic Infections
✓	Meningitis
✓	Bone Infections
✓✓	Parasitic Infections
✓	• Amebiasis
✓	• Lice
✓	• Scabies
✓	• Worms
✓	• Lyme Disease
✓✓	• Giardia
✓	• Malaria
	Fungal Infections
✓✓	• Oral Candidiasis (thrush)
✓	• Systemic
✓	• Tinea (scalp, foot, skin, versicolor)
✓	• Onychomycosis (nail bed)
	Skin Infections
✓	• Impetigo
✓✓	• Cellulitis
✓✓	• Abscesses
✓✓✓	• Skin Ulcers
	Viral Infections
✓✓	• Chickenpox
✓✓✓	• Influenza
✓✓✓	• HIV/AIDS
✓✓	• Hepatitis
✓✓	• Herpes
	Vaginal Infections
✓✓	• Candidiasis
✓✓	• Trichomoniasis
✓✓	• Bacterial
✓✓	• Genital Herpes
✓✓✓	• Pelvic Inflammatory Disease
	STDs
✓✓	• Chlamydia
✓✓	• Neisseria Gonorrhoeae
✓	• Syphilis
Cardiovascular Disease	
✓✓✓	Hypertension
✓✓✓	Angina
✓✓✓	Heart Failure
✓✓✓	Arrhythmias
✓✓✓	Stroke
✓✓✓	Thrombotic Disease
✓✓✓	Myocardial Infarction
✓✓✓	Dyslipidemia
✓	Endocarditis
CNS Disease/Condition	
✓✓✓	Depression
✓✓✓	• Bipolar Disease
✓	• Mania
✓✓	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
✓✓✓	Anxiety
✓✓	Panic Disorder
✓✓✓	Insomnia
✓✓✓	Seizure Disorder
✓✓	Parkinson's Disease
✓✓	Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease
✓✓✓	Pain
✓✓	• Migraine Headaches
✓✓	• Other Headaches
✓✓✓	• Acute Pain
✓✓✓	• Chronic Pain
✓✓✓	• Cancer Pain
✓✓	Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity
✓✓✓	Schizophrenia
✓✓✓	Psychosis
✓✓	Trigeminal Neuralgia
Gastrointestinal Disease	
✓✓✓	Ulcers
✓✓✓	Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease
✓✓	Inflammatory Bowel Disease
✓✓	• Crohn's Disease
✓✓	• Ulcerative Colitis
✓✓	Irritable Bowel Syndrome
✓	Ostomy
✓✓	Diverticulitis
✓✓✓	Diarrhea
✓✓✓	Nausea/Vomiting
✓✓✓	Pseudomembranous Colitis
✓	Obstructive Bowel Disease
✓✓✓	Constipation
Respiratory Disease	
✓✓✓	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
✓✓✓	Asthma
Skin Conditions	
✓✓	Psoriasis
✓✓	Dermatitis
✓	Rosacea
✓	Acne
✓✓	Shingles
✓✓✓	First Aid
✓✓	• Cuts, abrasions
✓✓	• Burns
✓✓	• Bruises, sprains
✓	Warts
✓	Corns, callouses
Endocrine/Hormone Imbalance	
	Diabetes
✓✓✓	• Type 1

✓✓✓	• Type 2
✓✓✓	• Hypoglycemia
	Thyroid Disease
✓✓✓	• Hypothyroidism
✓✓	• Hyperthyroidism
✓✓✓	Osteoporosis
✓✓	Hormone Replacement Therapy
✓✓✓	Contraception
✓	Infertility
Rheumatoid/Arthritic/Autoimmune	
	Arthritis
✓✓✓	• Rheumatoid arthritis
✓✓✓	• Osteoarthritis
✓	Primary Immune Deficiency Diseases
✓	Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)
✓	Scleroderma
✓	Nephritis
✓✓	Gout
Nutritional/Metabolic/Fluid Imbalance	
✓	Nutritional deficiencies, demands, supplements (vitamins, minerals, etc.)
✓	Enzyme deficiencies
✓✓✓	Obesity

Other	
	Allergic Reactions
✓✓✓	• Allergic rhinitis
✓✓✓	• Hayfever
✓	• Stevens Johnson syndrome
✓	• Anaphylaxis
	Blood Disorders
✓✓	• Iron deficiency anemia
	Eye Conditions
✓✓	• Glaucoma
✓✓	• Cataract
✓✓	• Allergic reactions / irritations
✓✓	• Contact lens issues
	Drug Abuse/Misuse, Addiction
✓✓✓	• Smoking cessation
✓✓✓	• Methadone
✓✓	• Alcohol
	Triage/Emergent situations
✓	• Poisoning/toxin exposure
✓	• Traumatic injury, shock
✓✓✓	Diagnostic testing (e.g., pregnancy, glucose, etc.)
✓✓✓	Herbal products, supplements
✓✓	Sexual dysfunction
✓✓✓	Renal failure
✓✓✓	Liver disease
✓✓	Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy (BPH)

APPENDIX 2
References

Guide to Knowledge Assessment References

Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS)

The Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS) is Canada's source for drug information. It contains more than 2200 product monographs for drugs, vaccines and natural health products, including 146 new products for the Canadian market. The product monographs are prepared by the pharmaceutical manufacturers and approved by the Therapeutic Products Directorate, Health Canada. The CPS Editorial Policy may be consulted for more information. This definitive resource also has 140 monographs written by the editorial staff of CPhA, based on the best available evidence and reviewed by expert physicians and pharmacists. Clinical tools, product images and directories of sources for drug and health care information are included. A comprehensive cross-referenced index of generic and brand names ensures you can easily find what you're looking for. [1]

The 2010 edition of the CPS contains the following sections:

- Brand and generic name index (green section)
- Therapeutic guide (pink section)
- Product identification section
- Directory (yellow section)
- Clin-info (lilac section)
- Product monographs (white section)

Refer to the Canadian Pharmacists' Association website at: www.pharmacists.ca/content/products/cps_english.cfm for more information about the CPS.

Therapeutic Choices

Based on the best available medical evidence, *Therapeutic Choices* has been a trusted source of evidence-based treatment information for over a decade. Aimed at all health care practitioners involved in therapeutic decision making, this book presents therapeutic information to support better patient care. Practical clinical information is referenced and organized in a clear and concise format with each topic including decision trees (algorithms) and drug tables to support decision making. Chapters are written by distinguished Canadian health care professionals and are peer reviewed by experts.

[1] Canadian Pharmacists' Association www.pharmacists.ca/content/products/cps_english.cfm

Highlights of the Fifth Edition:

- Practical information on over 150 conditions, including three new chapters: Primary Prevention of Vascular Disease, Restless Legs Syndrome and Bipolar Disorder
- Over 50 new Canadian drug products added to the drug tables
- Pharmacoeconomic Considerations presented in an easy-to-read format
- Dosage Adjustment in Renal Impairment appendix redesigned for quicker reference[2]

e-Therapeutics+

e-Therapeutics+ is Canada's authoritative source for prescribing and managing drug therapy at the point of care. Providing pharmacists and other health care professionals with online access to evidence-based, reliable Canadian drug and therapeutic information, *e-Therapeutics+* helps practitioners know what works when.

A uniquely Canadian resource, *e-Therapeutics+* offers a disease-oriented approach to weighing treatment options for your patients. It supports the safe and efficient use of pharmaceuticals for improved patient safety and outcomes. Combining trusted information from CPhA's *Therapeutic Choices* with the full power of e-CPS and a continually growing range of external references, *e-Therapeutics+* delivers a centralized resource for superior drug therapy management.[3]

Patient Self-Care

Patient Self-Care. Helping Your Patients Make Therapeutic Choices (PSC) provides practical knowledge for practitioners to initiate patient dialogue, assess and make recommendations for conditions that can be treated without prescription. Evidence-based, quick and easy to use, PSC includes:

- Patient assessment
- Health promotion
- Lifestyle management
- Nonprescription therapy
- Outcomes monitoring
- Patient information resources

Comparative tables on thousands of OTC products are available in the *Compendium of Self-Care Products*.[4]

[2] Canadian Pharmacists' Association www.pharmacists.ca/content/products/therapeutic.cfm
[3] Canadian Pharmacists' Association www.pharmacists.ca/content/products/etherapeutics.cfm
[4] Canadian Pharmacists' Association www.pharmacists.ca/content/products/patient_selfcare.cfm

HPA Standards for Pharmacist Practice

The Standards for Pharmacist Practice shape and guide professional practice. They guide pharmacist practice. They must be read or considered in the context of the overall legislative framework that includes the relevant acts, regulations, and the code of ethics. The standards set out the minimum acceptable standard of practice for pharmacy practitioners.

APPENDIX 3

Participants' Agreement: Obligations and Rules of Conduct for Knowledge Assessment Participants

Please read carefully. By choosing to 'BEGIN EXAM', you are electronically signing this document.

Security and Confidentiality

In order that all participants may have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and problem-solving abilities, the Alberta College of Pharmacists maintains the security of the content of its assessments before, during and after each assessment. Copyright law protects all assessment materials. Participants must sign and abide by this "Participants' Agreement - Obligations and Rules of Conduct for Knowledge Assessment Participants", pertaining to all assessment materials.

Participants who contravene assessment rules, copyright, obligations, and these signed statements may be disqualified from the assessment, and this may result in invalidation or withholding of the results of the assessment. Participants are subject to any other action the college deems appropriate and necessary, including cost recovery for replacement of assessment items and possible disciplinary action.

The Competence Director of the Alberta College of Pharmacists may refer any such matter to the Complaints Director. Serious breaches resulting in substantial loss to the college or others may be referred to the Discipline process and/or legal action taken, to recover costs for damages.

Arrival at and Departure from the Assessment Site

1. No participant can enter the assessment room after the expiration of the first 30 minutes or leave during the first 30 minutes of the assessment.
2. Participants must sign in upon arrival and sign out when they have completed the assessment.

During the Assessment

1. Participants will explicitly follow directions given by the proctor.
2. Participants will avoid any collaboration, disruptive behavior and/or improper conduct during the assessment period, including
    - attempting to take the assessment for someone else,
    - giving or receiving help during the assessment,
    - recording, reproducing or disclosing assessment content in any manner or form,
    - removing assessment materials, and
    - failing to follow the proctor's instructions.

3. The proctor is authorized to dismiss anyone who engages in improper conduct. The proctor will file a written report with the college and provide a copy to the participant.
4. Participants may use the washrooms one at a time escorted by the proctor.
5. Participants must leave all assessment materials provided for use during the assessment with the proctor prior to leaving the assessment site.
6. Before leaving the assessment site, participants must record on the "Knowledge Assessment Questionnaire" provided at their workstations any condition that may have adversely affected their performance during the assessment. All comments and complaints are reviewed by the Knowledge Assessment Panel and considered in determining the outcomes of the assessment. Responses will be made in writing to the complainants regarding substantive issues.

At All Times

1. Assessment questions are the property of the Alberta College of Pharmacists and may not be recorded, disclosed or reproduced in any manner.
    - "Disclosure" includes discussing assessment questions with other KA participants, other pharmacists, or any other person or organization. Discussing assessment questions is strictly forbidden.
2. All assessment materials and results are strictly confidential. Only the Alberta College of Pharmacists may report, publicize or distribute such information.
3. In the interest of fairness to all and in keeping with the Code of Ethics, participants are obligated to report to the proctor or to the Competence Director of the Alberta College of Pharmacists if any improper conduct or any violation of assessment security is suspected or known before, during or after the assessment.
4. Any participant found in breach of this "Participants' Agreement", including assessment security, may be subject to forfeiture of the assessment and/or disciplinary action by the Alberta College of Pharmacists.
5. The Competence Director of the Alberta College of Pharmacists may refer any such matter to the Complaints Director. Serious breaches resulting in substantial loss to the college or others may be referred to the Complaints Director and/or legal action taken to recover costs for damages.

Declaration

By selecting 'BEGIN EXAM' below, I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the above provisions and will abide by the content and intent of these provisions.

I will also declare/document any hindrance, error or procedural discrepancy in the assessment that may have adversely affected my performance.

Clicking the 'BEGIN EXAM' button is your attestation that you will abide by the Participant's Agreement. If you do not agree to abide by the Participant's Agreement please advise the proctor now and you will be signed out of the assessment.

APPENDIX 4
Knowledge Assessment Questionnaire

Name: _____ Registration #: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

1. Assessment Questions

Did you find any ambiguous, unclear or flawed questions in the assessment?

◯ YES ◯ NO

If YES, please indicate the question number and your answer choice and provide specific details if possible.

Question No. _____ Your answer choice: _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Question No. _____ Your answer choice: _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Question No. _____ Your answer choice: _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CONTINUED ON NEXT SIDE…

2. Writing the Knowledge Assessment

Did you experience any procedural problems during the assessment?

◯ YES ◯ NO

If YES, please describe: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Did you experience anything during the assessment that may have adversely affected your performance?

◯ YES ◯ NO

If YES, please describe: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX 5
Online Knowledge Assessment Tutorial

http://acppractice.proexams.com/

APPENDIX 6
Cover Sheet

RxCEL PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO
COVER SHEET

CONTACT INFORMATION

Pharmacist Name:		**Registration Number:**
Mailing Address:		
Phone Numbers: **Home:**	**Work:**	**Cell:**
Email Address:		
Description of Practice(s):		

1. UNDERTAKE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Step 1: Self-Assessment

- Complete the self-assessment portion of your the RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Plan.
- **Date self-assessment last reviewed:** _____

Step 2: Learning Plan

- Review the competency areas you identified in your self-assessment to work on.
- For each competency area you want to work on, write a learning objective describing what you want to learn. Write your learning objective in the SMART format – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-based.
- Beside each learning objective, identify how you plan to meet the objective. Set a target date for meeting each learning objective.

Step 3: Learning Activities

- Undertake learning activities to help you meet your learning objective(s).

Step 4: Evaluation

- Record the completion date for your learning objective in the Evaluation section of the Continuing Professional Development Plan.
- Evaluate your learning and summarize your conclusions in the last column (Summary) of the Evaluation section of the Continuing Professional Development Plan. Document some key points from your evaluation of your learning. You may want to identify how you will apply your new learning to your practice. Consider whether you want to undertake more learning in this area, which could prompt the development of a new learning objective.

  Use these questions as a guide:
  - What did I want to learn?
  - Did I learn it?
  - How will I apply this learning in my practice?
  - Do I need to do more learning in this area?
- Complete documentation. Enter information about your learning activities into your RxCEL Continuing Professional Development Log.

2. DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

Select **THREE** learning projects that you have completed and implemented in your pharmacy practice to write up as evidence of your continuing competence.
Complete a Practice Enhancement Record for each one of the three learning projects.
Select only those learning projects for which you have evidence of implementation into your practice.
Each learning project must be completed no more than 24 months prior to the date of submission of your professional portfolio.

Practice Enhancement Record #1's Learning Objective (from Box 1C ii):

Practice Enhancement Record #2's Learning Objective (from Box 1C ii):

Practice Enhancement Record #3's Learning Objective (from Box 1C ii):

3. COMPILE YOUR PORTFOLIO

For each learning project compile evidence of implementation of your enhanced or new knowledge/skills/abilities into your pharmacy practice.

4. SUBMIT YOUR PORTFOLIO TO ACP

Submit **TWO** sets of your portfolio (comprised of this cover sheet, three Practice Enhancement Records, and the applicable evidence) to the Alberta College of Pharmacists.

Alberta College of Pharmacists
Attention: Competence Department
1200, 10303 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 3N6

Declaration - I hereby declare that:

- all of the information contained in this portfolio and all information supplied in support of my claims is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge;
- the evidence provided to support my practice enhancement records is authentic and relates to my own work; and
- I understand that the information contained in this professional portfolio is subject to review and that false or misleading statements concerning my practice enhancement efforts documented herein may be grounds for referral to the Complaints Director for further investigation.

_____ _____
(Signature) **(Date)**

APPENDIX 7
Practice Enhancement Record

PRACTICE ENHANCEMENT RECORD

Pharmacist Name:	Registration Number:	
Date(s):	Topic:	Record #

Step 1. PLAN TO ENHANCE YOUR PRACTICE

Step 1A. Reflect on Your Practice

How did you determine how you want to or need to enhance your practice? (check all that apply)

- ☐ completed a self-assessment process
- ☐ considered feedback about my practice, *e.g., practice review, feedback from a colleague, patient feedback, performance appraisal, external directives*
- ☐ reflected on management of patient or practice situation(s)
- ☐ scanned the literature *(journals, newsletters, Internet)*
- ☐ engaged in teaching, writing, research
- ☐ participated in a CE program
- ☐ participated in discussion with peers or others
- ☐ participated in a volunteer activity
- ☐ other *(specify in Notes)*

Notes:

Step 1B. How Do You Want to Enhance Your Practice?

DESCRIBE how you intend to enhance your practice.
What measurable impact/change/outcome do you hope to make in your practice? What impact do you anticipate this will have on patients and/or provision of patient care?

Step 1C. Plan Your Learning

i. **DESCRIBE the specific knowledge/skills/abilities that you need to gain or enhance through learning in order to achieve this impact/change/outcome.**

Tip: You may refer to your **Continuing Professional Development Plan** for a comprehensive list of the knowledge/skills/abilities (i.e., competencies) held by Alberta pharmacists. You may find it helpful to list the specific competencies you want to gain or enhance.

ii. **DEFINE the learning objective(s) that will enable you to gain or enhance the knowledge/skills/abilities to achieve this impact/change/outcome in your practice.**

State your learning objective in the SMART format – Specific, Measurable, Attainable by the time you submit your professional portfolio, Relevant to your practice, and Time-based [implemented by the time you submit your professional portfolio].

iii. This learning objective relates primarily to the following domain(s) (you may check more than one domain):

At least ONE practice enhancement record in your RxCEL Professional Portfolio must relate to ONE of pharmacy practice, medical knowledge, or systems-based practice.

- ☐ **pharmacy practice** (i.e., Competency Area A), **including but not limited to Patient Care Practice** (i.e., Competency A-1)
- ☐ **medical knowledge** , e.g., Disease States, Pharmacotherapy, Pharmacokinetics (i.e., relevant competencies from Competency Areas A and F)
- ☐ **systems-based practice** e.g., Professional Practice (i.e., Competency E-2), Interprofessional Collaboration (i.e., Competency B-4), and Patient Safety (i.e., Competency C-1)
- ☐ research (i.e., Competency A-8-7)
- ☐ drug information (i.e., Competency A-11)
- ☐ managing drug distribution (i.e., Competencies A-12 and A-13)
- ☐ communication skills (i.e., Competency Area B)
- ☐ education (i.e., Competency B-3)
- ☐ safety (i.e., Competency Area C)
- ☐ operational and business management (i.e., Competency Area D)
- ☐ professionalism (i.e., Competency Area E)
- ☐ continuing professional development (i.e., Competency E-5)

Notes:

Step 2. ACT TO ENHANCE YOUR PRACTICE

Learning Activities: DESCRIBE all relevant learning activities that you undertook to address this particular learning objective.

☐ group program *(workshop, course, conference)*

Name of course, s minar or event	Awarding Organization or Institution	Location	Date(s) Completed	Expiry Date (if applicable)

☐ self-study *program (print, video/audio, Internet)*

Name of course	Awarding Organization or Institution	Location	Date(s) Completed	Expiry Date (if applicable)

☐ planned literature search, *e.g., Medline, Internet.* DESCRIBE the databases searched and search criteria.
Topic:

☐ reading *(articles, texts, newsletters, manuals, Internet)*
SPECIFY the references read:

☐ discussion with colleagues or experts
Name of colleagues or experts and their area of expertise:

☐ preceptorship or mentorship with an expert
Name of preceptor or mentor and their area of expertise:

☐ other *(specify in Notes)*
Notes:

Step 3. EVALUATE YOUR PRACTICE ENHANCEMENT

Step 3A. Evaluate your learning
DESCRIBE the outcome of your learning (check all that apply):

☐ acquisition of knowledge and/or skills
Please describe:

☐ behavioural changes within my professional practice
Please describe:

☐ changes in organization and/or delivery of care
Please describe:

☐ benefit to patients or clients (may be at an individual, group or system level)
Please describe:

Step 3B. Evaluate implementation: DESCRIBE how you have applied and implemented your new knowledge, skills and/or abilities into your practice:

Step 3C. Evaluate achievement: If you achieved your plan to enhance your practice, elaborate using the SMART format. If not you did not achieve it, why not? Do you need to do more learning in this area? What is your new learning objective? How do you plan to undertake more learning in this area? (return to Step 1) Are there operational issues in enhancing your practice as planned? How will you address these?

Notes:

Step 4. PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF OUTCOME

PROVIDE evidence that supports achievement of your practice enhancement. Check all that apply. You must include at least **TWO** pieces of evidence for this Practice Enhancement Record, one of which must be **direct** evidence.

Direct Evidence: Documentation of enhancement of your practice produced as a direct result of the **work you have done** related to the practice enhancement you planned. Provide at least piece of direct evidence.

☐ Work samples, e.g., copies of actual care plan including follow-up *(strip all individually identifying patient information)*

Document #

☐ Notes from an education clinic you facilitated

Document #

☐ Copy of a presentation you gave on this topic

Document #

☐ Sample patient resources or other tools developed, e.g., information brochure, treatment algorithm

Document #

☐ Paper, article or poster you authored or co-authored

Document #

☐ Copies of policies and procedures developed

Document #

☐ Other *(specify in Notes)*

Document #

Notes:

DESCRIBE how this evidence demonstrates, supports or verifies the outcome or implementation into your practice:

Indirect Evidence: Documentation **about your work** or what others say **about you** or **your work**, related to the practice enhancement you planned.

- ☐ Feedback from patients/clients *(strip all individually identifying patient information)*

  Document #

- ☐ Letter(s) from supervisor or colleagues, including other health care professionals

  Document #

- ☐ Feedback from a presentation you presented

  Document #

- ☐ Summary of a recent performance appraisal

  Document #

- ☐ Other *(specify in Notes)*

  Document #

Notes:

DESCRIBE how this evidence demonstrates, supports or verifies the outcome or implementation into your practice:

Notes

Notes…continued

Competence Assessment Handbook

RxCEL
Competence Program

alberta college of
pharmacists