

# Pathways to Developing Independent Clinical Pharmacist Practitioners: Is there a better way forward? (Path-CPP)



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## Background

- The scope of practice of Canadian pharmacists varies widely, ranging from traditional dispensing roles to fully independent direct patient care practice with prescribing
- Although there have been attempts in other parts of the world to define and/or create additional credentialing for pharmacists who practice at the broadest scope, no uniform definition or designation exists in Canada
- For the purposes of this study we describe pharmacists who practice at the broadest scope as **clinical pharmacist practitioners (CPPs)** - *pharmacotherapy experts who practice independently, conduct thorough patient assessments, respond to consultations, monitor and adjust drug therapy, provide patient and colleague education, and may prescribe independently or in collaboration with other health professionals*
- Given the substantial body of literature that supports the beneficial impact of pharmacists on direct patient care, it would be desirable to address barriers and enhance enablers to pharmacists attaining CPP-level of practice
- Access to a greater number of clinical pharmacist practitioners could benefit the Canadian healthcare system

## Objectives

- To propose potential pathways that could facilitate the attainment and/or recognition of clinical pharmacist practitioner level practice in Canada

## Methods

- Design:** Qualitative descriptive study which employs thematic analysis and grounded theory methodology
- Recruitment:** Semi structured interviews were conducted with two main populations who were nominated by their peers:
  - Canadian Clinical Pharmacist Practitioners (N = 13) – Main Analysis
  - Canadian healthcare system stakeholders (key individuals identified from academia, regulatory, and practice domains, N = 6) for contrasting perspectives
- Analysis:** Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim into text and organized using NVivo 12 Pro
  - Thematic analysis of the interviews (conducted by RP and ML) yielded themes, concepts, and representative quotes
  - A grounded theory was developed around potential CPP pathways
  - Member checking will be performed to allow participants to provide feedback on the grounded theory

Figure 1: CPP Representative Themes and Quotes (N = 13)

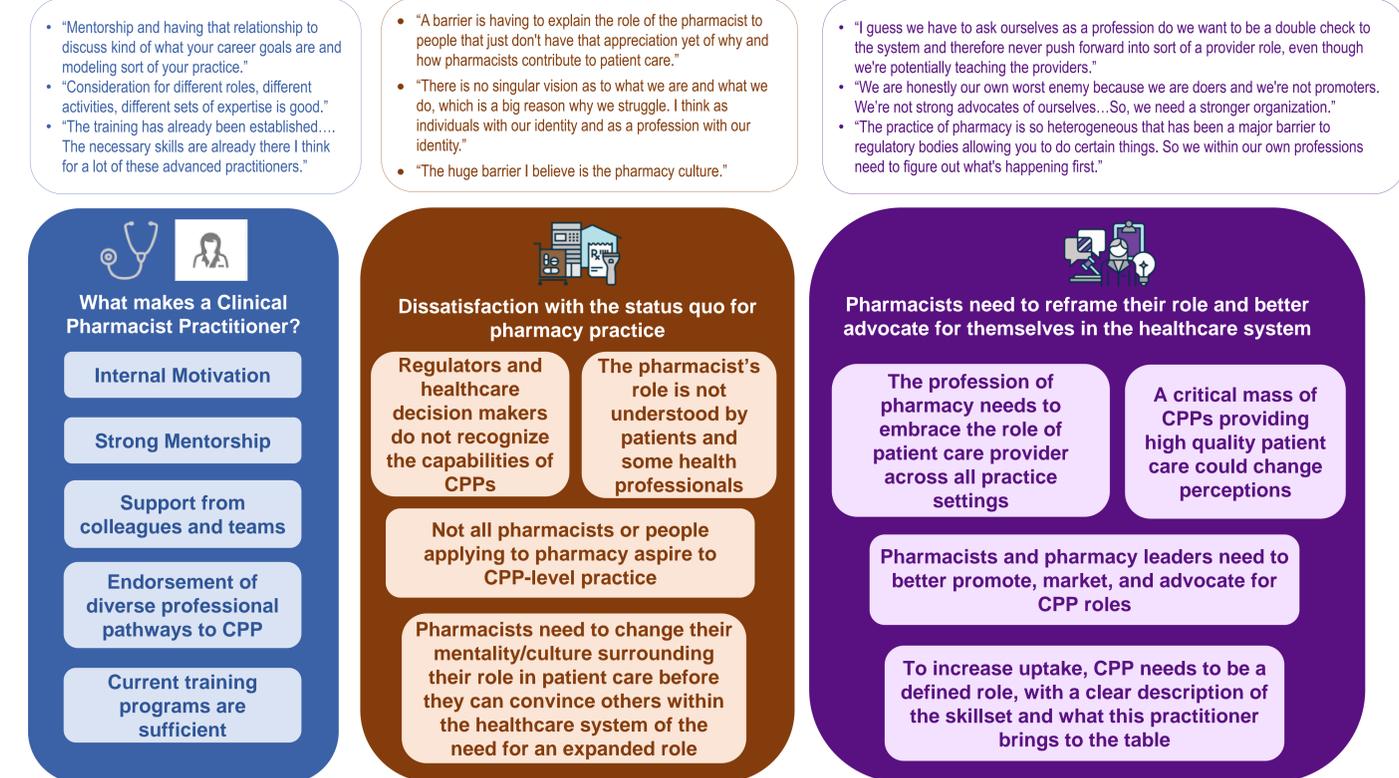


Figure 3: Healthcare system stakeholder perspectives (N = 6)

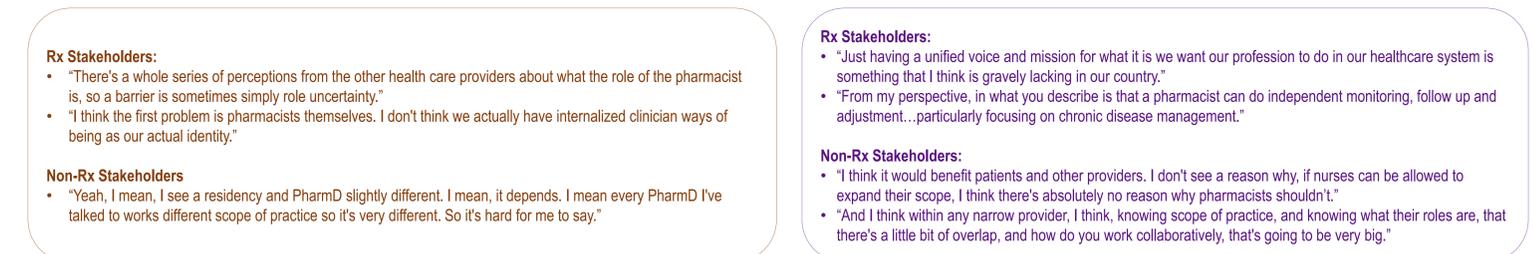


Figure 2: Grounded Theory Pathways

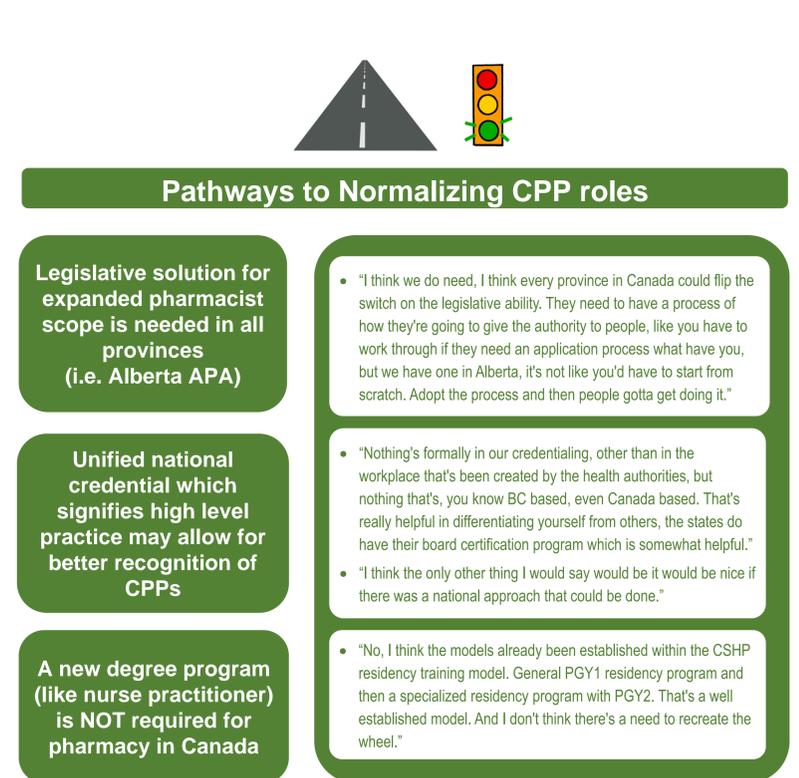


Table 1: Participants

Clinical Pharmacist Practitioners (N = 13)		Healthcare System Stakeholders (N = 6)	
<b>Province:</b>		<b>Rx Stakeholders (N = 4)</b>	
British Columbia	9	<b>Province:</b>	
Alberta	2	British Columbia	2
Manitoba	1	Ontario	2
Quebec	1	<b>Practice Setting:</b>	
<b>Practice Setting:</b>		Academia	2
Hospital	8	Regulatory	1
Ambulatory	3	Clinical Advocacy	1
Community	2	<b>Non-Rx Stakeholders (N = 2)</b>	
Average practice experience 20.2 years		<b>Profession:</b>	
		Nurse practitioner	2 (both in BC)
		<b>Practice Setting:</b>	
		Hospital	1
		Ambulatory	1



## Conclusions

- Current Canadian CPPs cited internal motivation, strong mentorship, and endorsement of diverse professional pathways as the most common themes in achieving CPP level practice
- Key theme categories that were identified amongst Canadian CPPs and healthcare system stakeholders included: I) A sense of dissatisfaction with the status quo for pharmacy practice II) Pharmacists need to reframe their role and better advocate for themselves in the healthcare system
- Central issues amongst these theme categories from both CPPs and healthcare system stakeholders were the heterogenous image that the pharmacy profession puts forward, calling into question the pharmacy culture, and role uncertainty within the profession and in how pharmacists are perceived
- Ways to get past these issues may include embracing the care provider image in clearly defined roles, stronger advocacy from pharmacists and pharmacy leadership, and a larger number of practicing CPPs to promote the role and help train practitioners of the future
- Participants mostly agreed that a new degree program is not required for advancing pharmacy practice in Canada, and the majority of the pieces are already in place. Pathways forward rely on a legislative solution for expanded pharmacist scope (many pointed towards the Alberta model). A unified national credential may be a useful way of recognizing practitioners who are ready to take on this advanced practice

## Limitations

- Over representation of participants from both British Columbia and hospital practice
- Peer nomination may have introduced selection bias
- Subjective thematic analysis of qualitative data
- Small number of Non-Rx Stakeholder perspectives

## Next Steps

- Dissemination of results and ongoing discussions with Canadian pharmacy advocacy groups and healthcare system stakeholders
- Engagement of patient partners to further define societal need for CPPs