

Yukon pharmacists hoping election will bring changes to scope of practice

Written by Sonya Felix on November 4, 2016 for CanadianHealthcareNetwork.ca

All three major parties acknowledge important role of pharmacists.

November 7 is election day in The Yukon Territories and, whatever the outcome, pharmacists there are hoping the new government will finally expand their scope of practice.

In the lead up to Monday's vote, the Yukon Pharmacists Association (YPA) sent a letter to all party leaders asking what they'd do to modernize pharmacists' role in health care.

YPA was pleased that all three major parties responded favourably by acknowledging the important role of pharmacists.

Having more pharmacist involvement will improve our healthcare system efficiency

Despite much discussion in recent years, Yukon pharmacists' scope hasn't kept up with the national trend to allow pharmacists to renew, extend or adjust prescriptions, administer injections and prescribe.

YPA's letter to political parties asked for new legislation to allow pharmacists to keep up with what's happening elsewhere for the benefit of patients and the healthcare system.

Josianne Gauthier, YPA's president, told CBC news that the changes would save both patients' and doctors' time by avoiding tying up the territories' physicians with low-level requests.

"We know that medication treatments are increasingly complex," she said.

"Having more pharmacists involved in patient care can reduce unnecessary emergency visits, prevent hospitalization, prevent medication errors. Having more pharmacist involvement will improve our healthcare system efficiency."
