

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) for Pharmacy Professionals

What is COMPASS?

COMPASS stands for Community Pharmacy Professionals Advancing Safety in Saskatchewan.

When is COMPASS mandatory in community pharmacies?

COMPASS will become a permit requirement for all community pharmacies starting December 1, 2017.

Why COMPASS? What is the purpose? What are we trying to achieve?

COMPASS is being implemented as a proactive measure to ensure that pharmacies are identifying, documenting and resolving medication incidents. The purpose is to allow for shared learning amongst all community pharmacies, with the goal of preventing medication incidents and ensuring patient safety.

What is CQI (continuous quality improvement)?

As per the SPP bylaws, CQI is a structured process to improve all aspects of care and service continually, and an ongoing study to improve performance. Continuous Quality Improvement processes allow pharmacies to develop strategies to address medication incidents, as well as other issues within the pharmacy practice. As well, CQI ensures pharmacy staff are always improving with respect to medication safety and safe medication practice.

What are the COMPASS tools and why are each of them important to continuous quality improvement?

There are three tools included in the COMPASS program. The tools are:

1. CPhIR – Community Pharmacy Reporting System
2. MSSA – Medication Safety Self-Assessment
3. QI - Quality Improvement tool

The reason for including these three tools is because research shows that to have an effective CQI program, you must have:

- a method to report medication incidents for shared learning
- a method to proactively identify areas of concern
- a method to develop and monitor an improvement plan

What is medication safety and safe medication practices?

Safe medication practices refers to the processes and procedures within a community pharmacy that ensures patient safety. For example, workflow, staffing, prescription filling procedure, checking procedures, etc.

Medication safety refers to those things that both pharmacists and patients can do to ensure that the care that patients receive is the most appropriate and ultimately the safest for them. For example, the education patients receive, understanding of the information by the patient, appropriateness of patient's medication, etc.

How does COMPASS help patients?

COMPASS is a required continuous quality improvement program in Saskatchewan community pharmacies that is being implemented for the benefit of patients. The program gives pharmacists and pharmacy technicians the tools to identify, document, discuss and resolve medication incidents in order to prevent them from happening again.

Because pharmacy staff members are reporting incidents to a national database, not only can they learn from other pharmacies' incidents, but other pharmacies can learn from theirs. Part of the program also ensures that pharmacy staff members are proactively looking at processes and procedures within the pharmacy to identify any areas that may contribute to a medication incident. By identifying the area of concern, strategies can be implemented to address the issue and prevent medication incidents from occurring.



What are the 5 Questions Patients Should Ask?

1. **Changes** - Have any medications been added, stopped, or changed and why?
2. **Continue** – What medications do I need to keep taking and why?
3. **Proper Use** – How do I take my medications and for how long?
4. **Monitor** – How do I know if my medications are working and what side effects do I watch for?
5. **Follow-up** – Do I need any tests and when do I book my next appointment?



Where do I find the 5 Questions poster to post in my pharmacy?

The link can be found in the [Safety Resources section](#) under COMPASS on the SCPP website or [here](#).

What other information regarding the 5 Questions can I refer my patients to?

There is a link to a video that explains the 5 Questions. The link is <https://youtu.be/BJI1ToB-Dv8>

What other resources are available to help me talk to my patients regarding COMPASS medication safety, etc.?

Please refer to the Safety Resources under the COMPASS tab on the SCPP website.