

Frequently Asked Questions

Collaborative Drug Therapy Management (CDTM) and Immunization Expansion

CDTM Expansion

What is CDTM?

CDTM allows credentialed pharmacists who meet specific criteria to enter into a collaborative practice agreement with physicians. CDTM originated in the 1970s, as pharmacists were involved in direct patient care in rural areas, mostly within the Indian Health Services and Veteran's Affairs Hospitals and Clinics. Washington and California were the first states to allow CDTM in the private sector.

CDTM in New York State started out as a demonstration project in teaching hospitals in 2011 and the legislature put a two year sunset (or expiration) into the law. After showing improved clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction, CDTM has been extended and expanded (now to all hospitals/health-systems). However, the expiration remains in place and there are significant restrictions compared to other states.

As such, New York's CDTM law is fairly unique in that among the 48 states which allow CDTM, New York appears the only state in which CDTM sunsets every legislative session (2 years). Further, written consent from the patient is required, which is only required in 8 other states. There are approximately 20,000 practicing pharmacists in New York State, with only a few hundred participating in CDTM.

What is the current scope of CDTM in NYS?

CDTM currently applies exclusively to specifically credentialed pharmacists in locations covered by Article 28 of the Public Health Law, such as hospitals and health-systems. CDTM does not apply to non-Article 28 facilities. The Governor's last executive budget proposal would have expanded the bill to other areas overseen by a Medical Director, such as non-Article 28 clinically integrated networks (which would cover faculty practices and accountable care organizations). NYSCHP supports this expansion with the existing credentialing infrastructure. Unfortunately, this proposal was not adopted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What sort of credentials are required?

Pharmacist must have a specific number of years of experience based on the their terminal degree – if they have a Masters of Science or Doctor of Pharmacy (the latter of which is the new entry-level standard since the year 2000), they must have at least 2 years of active licensure with at least 1 year of clinical experience. If the pharmacist earned a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy, they must have at least 3 years of active licensure with at least 1 year of clinical experience.

In addition to licensure and experience, the pharmacist must have either completed an accredited residency program or must have obtained a certification from a board approved by the Department of Education, such as the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties (e.g.; Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist, BCPS). A residency program is a one to two year intensive, rotation-based experiential program that prepares pharmacists for clinical practice.

Frequently Asked Questions

Collaborative Drug Therapy Management (CDTM) and Immunization Expansion

What is the difference between CDTM and CMM?

CDTM is the current law in New York State, which allows pharmacists with the aforementioned credentials to enter into collaborative practice agreements with physicians to manage patients' chronic disease states. Providers voluntarily join the agreement and establish a protocol and scope with the pharmacist.

Comprehensive Medication Management (CMM), is a new proposal that would have a different and reduced education requirement for pharmacist-physician collaboration. CDTM is an existing law with infrastructure and proven outcomes in New York State. Implementing CMM on top of CDTM may cause confusion by introducing two different credentialing structures for similar collaboration agreements. A single standard for physician/pharmacist collaboration is ideal, as it will ensure public trust and provide clear expectations of credentials and education to providers. NYSCHP would prefer to expand on the framework of the existing law, rather than create a new parallel system.

What is the legislative status of CDTM?

New York's CDTM law will expire in July, 2022.

Are there differences between the bill NYSCHP supports (A1036/S4689) and the Governor's proposal?

The Governor's executive budget proposal included some important scope extensions. First, CDTM would be expanded to any facility with a Medical Director, which would include non-Article 28 clinics. Second, Nurse Practitioners would be added as a provider with whom pharmacists could collaborate for CDTM. Third, the credentials required to do CDTM that exist in regulation (board certification or residency) would be added to the statute. Fourth, the unnecessary requirement that the patient provides consent to participate in CDTM would be eliminated. Finally, the sunset provision, which is a major barrier to developing and growing programs, would be eliminated. The current sunset still exists despite the CDTM demonstration project taking place almost 10 years ago. The current law is set to expire in 2022.

The current legislative proposal (e.g. A1036/S4689 in the 2021-2022 session) would add Nurse Practitioners and eliminate the sunset, but would not modify the geographic restrictions, the consent process or the credentials.

Why is the patient consent requirement for CDTM an unnecessary barrier?

Leaving the requirement that a patient provides consent will improve patient access and streamline physician-pharmacist collaboration to optimize medication therapy. Consent was originally included in CDTM to ensure there was adequate discussion of what was considered "experimental" in New York: a medication expert helping a physician manage patients' medications. After 10 years, it is clear that CDTM is no longer experimental and does not require a separate, written consent. Indeed, most other services provided by non-physicians do not require a separate, written consent and almost all states do not have this level of requirement.

Frequently Asked Questions

Collaborative Drug Therapy Management (CDTM) and Immunization Expansion

Further, in the context of the pandemic, with expansion to telehealth, the existing requirement that a patient provides written consent is a significant barrier to those without access to electronic means, such as a computer or smartphone.

Immunization Bill Expansion

What is the current law regarding pharmacists as immunizers?

A registered pharmacist who is certified by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to administer immunizations is authorized to administer immunizing agents to prevent seasonal influenza to patients 2 years of age or older, and to administer immunizing agents to prevent COVID-19, pneumococcal disease, meningococcal disease, acute herpes zoster (shingles), tetanus, diphtheria, or pertussis disease to patients 18 years of age or older.

Administration of immunizations may be pursuant to either a patient specific prescription/order or a non-patient specific order. In New York State, the patient-specific or non-patient-specific order must be from a provider in the same county or adjoining county as the pharmacist.

What is the proposed expansion?

The proposed bill would expand the scope of vaccines that pharmacists are allowed to administer to include Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR), Varicella, and Human Papillomavirus (HPV). The proposed verbiage for this expansion would be from the current list of seven vaccines to include the verbiage “all CDC recommended vaccines” to accommodate the additional five as well as any additional vaccines that would be added to the recommended vaccine list in the future.

New York is one of only **three** states that does not allow pharmacists to administer all CDC-recommended vaccines. As an example, New York is the only state in the country that does not allow pharmacists to administer the Hepatitis A vaccine or the Hepatitis B vaccine.

This creates a critical lack of access of vaccines to the population and exacerbates health disparities, as it predominately affects those who have poorer access to healthcare and providers.

What are the benefits of the bill expansion?

Granting pharmacists the ability to administer all CDC recommended vaccines optimizes overall patient and population health by avoidance of preventable diseases, in turn decreasing hospitalizations. As seen with the focus on the COVID-19 vaccine, pharmacists serve a crucial role in ensuring good public health by providing easy access to vaccinations for those who want them.

In order to streamline pharmacist-provider communication and accurate recordkeeping, documentation is provided to the patient’s primary care provider when a vaccine is administered by a pharmacist. In many locations (such as chain pharmacies) this is done automatically through the electronic pharmacy system.

Frequently Asked Questions

Collaborative Drug Therapy Management (CDTM) and Immunization Expansion

What is the status of the bill expansion?

All pharmacy organizations are in agreement with this expansion bill. The reason for delay in passing is that the bill has been stalled for many years in the Assembly Higher Education Committee. There was strong support in the Senate in previous years and the Council expects that to continue in the upcoming session.

Further, now that we are in a pandemic, we believe there will be a bigger focus on vaccination. For example, in August 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services issued a directive intended to allow pharmacists in all states to administer all CDC-recommended vaccines to all patients aged 3 years and older, during the COVID-related state of emergency. This would override existing restrictions, such as those in New York State. We are awaiting clarification from the Department of Education on the impact of this directive.

Finally, the Governor included expansion of pharmacist scope to all CDC-recommended vaccines in his executive budget proposal. We feel that immunization by a pharmacist is no longer experimental – it is essential to promoting public health and safety.

Is there any opposition to the bill expansion?

MSSNY has released a memorandum of opposition. They generally oppose these types of scope of practice bills, and opposed the ability for pharmacists to administer the influenza and pneumococcal vaccines, too.

Does this bill mandate vaccinations in any way?

It is important to understand that this immunization expansion legislation does not **mandate** vaccinations, but rather expands access to vaccinations for patients who want them. This legislation avoids any mandate, and as such avoids any controversy. Some Assembly members and State Senators may be hesitant to support any legislation regarding vaccinations since the topic is very divisive.