



RN(AP) FAQs

November 2018

What is a registered nurse (authorized prescriber)?

The Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) and the College's General Council Regulation bring a new role: registered nurse (authorized prescriber) or RN(AP).

Those who wish to receive this designation must successfully complete an approved course of instruction and obtain a notation to practise as an RN(AP) in any of the following areas:

- Travel health
- Reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections and blood borne pathogens
- Diabetes health

An RN(AP) will be able to prescribe certain medications as well as order or receive diagnostic tests in these areas.

What else can an RN(AP) do?

An RN(AP) can practise both independently and with other health-care team members, including the client. Strong assessment skills and the authority to order and receive the results of screening and diagnostic tests are required for this practice. An RN(AP) will be expected to competently assess, diagnose, plan, implement and evaluate the provision of care.

RNs can order diagnostics too. What is the difference then?

The authorization mechanism for ordering and receiving the results of diagnostics is different.

RNs may order or receive reports of screening or diagnostic tests for the purpose of assessing, diagnosing or resolving a health condition that is appropriate to the RN's practice if the RN practises in an approved practice setting and does one of the following:

- uses a clinical decision tool in place at the approved practice setting, or
- collaborates with one of the following who is legally permitted and competent to order and receive those reports: RN(NP), RN(AP), physician, physician assistant, clinical assistant or pharmacist.

RN(AP)s can do all of the reserved acts an RN can do plus order or receive reports of screening or diagnostic tests listed in the Schedule. [Click here to see the Schedule in appendix A.](#)

Why do we need RN(AP)s?

This role will increase access to safe and effective health care in Manitoba. An RN(AP) who has additional competencies and authority to prescribe medications related to travel, reproductive or diabetes health will reduce delays in diagnosis and treatment.

Can an RN(AP) choose to specialize in only one of the three practice areas?

Yes. To receive the designation of RN(AP), an RN must complete a course of instruction and specialize in at least one of the areas of travel, reproductive or diabetes health. An RN can also choose to complete courses in all three areas.

Can an RN be “grandfathered” to become an RN(AP) based on previous work experience on one of the three practice areas?

No. An RN will be granted the authorized prescriber notation after they complete the approved course of instruction and demonstrate they have met the expected competencies for prescribing. Some of the competencies within the course of instruction include:

- Professional responsibilities with an understanding of legislative and professional frameworks,
- Assessment and diagnosis employing critical thinking and diagnostic reasoning skills in clinical decision-making; and
- Pharmacotherapeutics with the application of pharmacology knowledge and evidence-informed practice.

Where can I find the course to become an RN (authorized prescriber)?

Red River College offers a Board-approved Nurse Prescriber Advanced Certificate. [Click here for more information.](#)

When can RNs begin authorized prescribing?

An RN will need to successfully complete the course of instruction with Red River College, then obtain a notation to prescribe from the College.

Is having the authorized prescriber notation required to practise as an RN?

The authorized prescriber notation is only required if an RN will be prescribing.

Can delegation to RNs for prescribing continue?

No. Only RNs with the authorized prescriber notation can write prescriptions. An RN will need to consult and collaborate with a health-care provider who has the authority to prescribe in order to achieve the necessary access to care.

Can RNs titrate medications?

Yes, as long as the following criteria are met.

In all practice areas RNs are expected to meet the standards of practice and applicable practice expectations including the application of requisite knowledge, skill and judgment.

Where a medication requires a prescription, there must be a prescriber involved to prescribe the medication based on a client-specific assessment. The prescription or order may be for a range of medication dosages which are to be titrated in order to achieve the desired clinical effects (while avoiding as many side effects as possible.)

Where you are to assist the client in the titration of medications, you are expected to use nursing process and clinical judgment in implementing the prescriber's orders or prescription. The goal of your care is to support the client's self-care and optimal health.

Your role can include any of the following;

- Gathering assessment data
- Providing information, education or counselling to the client on the medication, disease process or process of assessment
- Supporting the client to self-administer the titrated dose of medication
- Administration of the titrated dose medication

You are expected to work collaboratively with the prescriber and consult with the prescriber as necessary, dependent on the assessment of the client.

Can an RN who worked as an authorized prescriber in another jurisdiction become authorized to prescribe in Manitoba?

Although there are similarities between roles across jurisdictions, there are also differences. Please contact Diana Heywood, Practice and Standards Consultant at dheywood@crnm.mb.ca if you have specific questions about your situation.

What are RNs prescribing in other provinces?

[Click here to learn about authorized prescribing in Saskatchewan](#)

[Click here to learn about authorized prescribing in Alberta](#)

[Click here to learn about authorized prescribing in Quebec](#)

Do other provinces or countries have RN(AP)s?

Yes. Prescribing has been part of an RN's scope of practice for many years in England and Ireland. We examined how these places planned for, implemented and evaluated this role to determine why it's been so successful. Other provinces in Canada are also either examining or already planning to implement this role.

[Click here to learn about authorized prescribing in New Zealand](#)

[Click here to learn about authorized prescribing in the United Kingdom](#)

What about additional areas for RN authorized prescribing?

Consideration of further areas for authorized prescribing by RNs will depend on factors such as public need, safety, acceptability and impact of this role.

Will there be a limit on the number of RN(AP)s in Manitoba?

A limit has not been defined as the number of RN(AP)s needed depends on a variety of factors such as the public's access to care needs, availability of health-care providers to meet these needs and the impact RNs can have in meeting the public's care needs.

Will an RN be required to have additional education, such as a university degree, in order to achieve the Authorized Prescriber notation?

Red River College has determined admission requirements. [Click here for more information.](#)

Can an RN(AP) become self-employed in this role?

RN(AP)s with a diabetes health patient population will work in approved practice settings.

What sort of insurance should an RN(AP) have?

As a member of the College, an RN(AP) is eligible for assistance from the [Canadian Nurses Protective Society](#) which offers legal advice, risk management services, legal assistance and professional liability protection related to nursing practice. [Click here for more information from CNPS on prescribing.](#)

What is the registration fee for an RN(AP)?

Registration fees are set in College bylaws and are to be determined.