



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is eHealthNB?

eHealthNB provides current, relevant health information in a standardized manner and protects the privacy, confidentiality and security of patient information.

There is one single point of access which is available anytime, anywhere. eHealthNB has been designed to share information between healthcare providers that allows for patient care to be unified and holistic. Information from the Drug Information System (DIS) and the New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP) is included.

This is the first consolidated province-wide system of its kind in New Brunswick.

2. What is the provincial Electronic Health Record (EHR)?

The backbone of the new system is technology called the Electronic Health Record (EHR). Electronic health records brings all the old paper-and-film aspects of health records and information - from X-ray images to prescription history - into the digital world where it is easily received, stored and shared.

As its name suggests, EHR provides an electronic display of a person's most up-to-date health record. It includes patient-specific information such as laboratory results, diagnostic imaging reports, hospital visits and prescriptions filled at community pharmacies.

Authorized healthcare professionals are allowed to access EHRs.

3. What plans are there for the Drug Information System (DIS)?

The first step toward the implementation of the Drug Information System (DIS) is having all community pharmacies connected and submitting prescription information to the system. Prescription information represents one of the many sources of information being contributed to the Electronic Health Record (EHR). The EHR is a province-wide system that includes a display of the medication summary in real-time for patients who have a prescription filled in a community pharmacy in New Brunswick. All community pharmacies submit prescription information to the system.

Future DIS requirements will be identified in collaboration with the EHR Pharmacy Technical Group and other stakeholders.

The EHR is a secure and private system that authorized healthcare professionals may use to access patient information. All authorized healthcare professionals will be subject to the province's *Personal Health Information Privacy and Access Act* (PHIPAA).

- *Personal Health Information Privacy and Access Act* (PHIPAA):
- <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowTdm/cs/P-7.05/>

4. Why do we need a provincial drug information system?

The Drug Information System (DIS) and New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP) will make it easier for authorized healthcare professionals to use a patient's most up-to-date prescription information to make safe, more informed decisions about patient care.

5. What are the benefits of the Drug Information System (DIS)?

The Drug Information System (DIS) will increase the quality and safety of patient care for all New Brunswickers and those who receive care here by:

- sharing electronic health information among authorized healthcare providers;
- providing a comprehensive medication history (of filled prescriptions) for individual patients;
- helping to prevent duplicate medications.
- Identifying drug related problems

6. What is the New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP)?

The New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP) is a real-time electronic display within the Electronic Health Record (EHR) of all monitored drug prescriptions filled at community pharmacies. Monitored drugs include narcotics and controlled drugs such as Dilaudid, Percocet, Ritalin and Ativan. The NB PMP electronic display enables authorized prescribers and pharmacists to view a patient's monitored drug prescriptions in order to make safe, more informed decisions about patient care.

Additional PMP functionality for prescribers and pharmacists is being developed in collaboration with stakeholders. NB PMP can trigger alerts in real-time to help identify potential issues such as double-doctoring, prescriptions filled at multiple pharmacies and high quantities of monitored drugs. The information from NB PMP will also support monitoring drug prescribing and dispensing patterns in New Brunswick.

7. Why do we need the New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP)?

The New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP) can help:

- improve the prescribing of narcotics and controlled substances;
- support ways to lower or prevent the harms related to these drugs; and
- identify patients who may be at risk of addiction.

NB PMP is not meant to prevent the use of monitored drugs for legitimate medical purposes. The real-time electronic display will make it easier for prescribers and pharmacists to use a patient's most up-to-date information to make safe, more informed decisions related to monitored drugs.

Canada is second only to the United States as the largest per-capita user of prescription narcotics such as Dilaudid and Percocet. In New Brunswick, the number of narcotic prescriptions and the number of patients needing methadone treatment for dependence have been rising.

8. Is there legislation supporting the New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP)?

The New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP) is supported by the *Prescription Monitoring Act* and its general regulation.

- *Prescription Monitoring Act* (NB PMP):
 - <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showdoc/cs/P-15.05>
- General Regulation – *Prescription Monitoring Act* (NB PMP):
 - <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showdoc/cr/2014-142>

The Act provides the authority to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of monitored drugs such as Dilaudid, Percocet, Ritalin and Ativan. It outlines the monitored drug information that pharmacies will be required to provide. The community pharmacies in New Brunswick have submitted information to NB PMP since November 2016.

9. What are the goals of the New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP)?

The New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP) allows for the sharing of monitored drug information in real-time by authorized prescribers and pharmacists:

- to promote optimal prescribing and use of monitored drugs for legitimate medical purposes;
- to enable early identification of individuals at risk for addiction; and
- to reduce the misuse and abuse of monitored drugs.

10. What are considered monitored drugs under the New Brunswick Prescription Monitoring Program (NB PMP)?

Narcotics (opioids), controlled drugs, benzodiazepines and other targeted substances are considered monitored drugs. Examples include Dilaudid, Percocet, Ritalin and Ativan. A few other drugs that work similarly to opioids and benzodiazepines are also included.

11. Will it be mandatory for pharmacies to submit prescription information?

Yes. The *Prescription Monitoring Act* will require that all community pharmacies submit information on all monitored drug prescriptions dispensed to individuals.

- *Prescription Monitoring Act* (NB PMP):
- <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showdoc/cs/P-15.05>

12. What information should patients give their pharmacy to help ensure their Electronic Health Record (EHR) is complete?

Pharmacies will require a provincial health (Medicare) card number or federal equivalent. The Medicare card or equivalent is the most reliable piece of information to link a patient's medication history from all community pharmacies in New Brunswick. In addition, a patient should make sure his or her legal name, date of birth, current civic address and telephone number are on file at the pharmacy. This means that prescriptions filled at any community pharmacy can be easily added to the medication history in the patient's Electronic Health Record (EHR).

13. What information about a patient's filled prescriptions will authorized healthcare professionals see in the Electronic Health Record (EHR)?

The following information may be viewed in the Electronic Health Record (EHR):

- the name of the drug;
- its strength;
- the amount prescribed, dispensed, and remaining;
- directions for use;
- the name of the prescriber; and
- information on the pharmacy where the prescription was filled.

14. How will personal health information be protected?

The Department of Health is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of personal health information in accordance with the *Personal Health Information Privacy and Access Act* (PHIPAA).

- *Personal Health Information Privacy and Access Act* (PHIPAA):
- <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowTdm/cs/P-7.05/>
- A fact sheet is available:
- <https://www.gnb.ca/0051/acts/pdf/7367-7033%20%E2%82%AC%20English%20Fact%20sheet%2011s.pdf>

The Electronic Health Record (EHR) has strong security features and safeguards to prevent personal health information from being inappropriately accessed or viewed. Access by authorized users to health information is tracked and monitored.

15. Can individuals prevent authorized users from seeing their prescription information in the Electronic Health Record (EHR)?

Individuals have the option of restricting one or more authorized users from viewing their prescription information, with the exception of monitored drugs.

- For more information, contact the Electronic Health Record (EHR) administrator:
- EHRAdministrator@gnb.ca

In accordance with the *Prescription Monitoring Act*, individuals cannot prevent any authorized prescribers or pharmacists involved in their care from accessing their monitored drug information.

- *Prescription Monitoring Act* (NB PMP):
- <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/showdoc/cs/P-15.05>