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GUIDANCE TO PHARMACIST-MANAGERS APPLYING FOR A TECHNICIAN:PHARMACIST RATIO OF 5:1 OR GREATER

The North Carolina Pharmacy Practice Act provides that “a pharmacist may not supervise more than two pharmacy technicians unless the pharmacist-manager receives written approval from the Board. The Board may not allow a pharmacist to supervise more than two pharmacy technicians unless the additional pharmacy technicians are certified pharmacy technicians.” G.S. 90-85.15A(c))

The pharmacist-manager is the “person who accepts responsibility for the operation of a pharmacy in conformance with all statutes and rules pertinent to the practice of pharmacy and distribution of drugs” 21 NCAC 46.1813(27). That includes ensuring that the pharmacy has sufficient personnel to provide pharmacy services safely. 21 NCAC 46.1601(a). Accordingly, the decision whether to seek a technician:pharmacist ratio increase – and at what level – is committed by law to the pharmacist-manager’s judgment.

A pharmacist-manager’s request for a 3:1 or 4:1 technician:pharmacist ratio may be allowed by Board staff without formal Board action as long as the pharmacist-manager demonstrates that the pharmacy employs a sufficient number certified technicians to meet the ratio.

A pharmacist-manager’s request for a 5:1 or high technician:pharmacist ratio must be considered by the full Board. Board staff will notify the pharmacist-manager when the request has been calendared for Board review. To facilitate that review, the pharmacist-manager should upload, at least two weeks prior to the Board review, a document to the online ratio increase application that addresses the following:

- An overview of services that the pharmacy provides, including technology employed to assist with dispensing functions.
- Average daily volume of prescriptions dispensed (new or refill), vaccines administered, point-of-care tests administered (e.g., COVID, strep, flu).
- A review of the pharmacy’s quality assurance program.
- Current pharmacist staffing levels and utilization.
- Current technician staffing levels and utilization.

- Proposed technician staffing levels and utilization, including: (a) how the increase will facilitate safe delivery of pharmacy services; and (b) how pharmacist supervision of increased technician staff will occur.
- Will the pharmacy also increase pharmacist staffing levels? If yes, please describe proposed pharmacist staffing levels and utilization. If no, why not?
- Provide photographs of the pharmacy sufficient to demonstrate workflow processes.

Though not required, Board members often find a PowerPoint presentation summarizing these items helpful. If you wish to use one, please upload it, along with the document fully addressing these items, at least two weeks prior to the review.