



National Incident Data Repository Safety Brief

Nova Scotia Data

from community pharmacies

Reporting period: April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024

7,250 reports received

Stages of Medication-Use Process

Prescription order entry	5,351
Prescription preparation/dispensing	3,006
Prescribing	377
Administration	198
Monitoring/follow-up	59

"Not applicable" was reported in 88 incidents

Types of Incidents (including near misses) (Top 5)

Incorrect dose/frequency	1,660
Incorrect quantity	1,290
Incorrect prescriber	802
Incorrect drug	755
Incorrect duration of treatment	672

Reported Levels of Harm

No error (e.g., near miss)	5,381
No harm	1,750
Mild harm	109
Moderate harm	9
Severe harm	0
Death	1

National Learning

Nova Scotia community pharmacies contribute to national learning and safety initiatives that incorporate learning from reported medication incidents and suggest system safeguards to prevent patient harm.

A selected focus for this safety brief is errors associated with prescription transfers. In Nova Scotia, within this subset of errors (n=84), the order entry stage was most often involved (87%), and incorrect quantity was among the top 5 types of error.



The following tips can optimize safe transcription of transferred prescriptions:

SAFETY TIP: Ensure all staff are properly trained on how to transfer a prescription from another pharmacy when retrieving from the Nova Scotia Drug Information System (NS DIS).

SAFETY TIP: Include in the order entry process a double check of the transfer record, particularly of fields that lack units of measure and can differ between pharmacy dispensing systems (e.g., "quantity" could be "1" [bottle] in some, and "50" [mL] in others).

SAFETY TIP: As part of the clinical assessment, ensure a thorough review of the patient profile history on the NS DIS and address any discrepancies.

A key component of ISMP Canada data analysis is a review of the incident descriptions. The efforts by reporters to provide information that helps identify emerging issues and shared learning opportunities are gratefully acknowledged.

Additional safety recommendations can be found in ISMP Canada Safety Bulletins: <https://ismpcanada.ca/safety-bulletins/>

REPORT ✓ **LEARN** ✓ **ACT** ✓

More than 269,800 reports of medication incidents have been submitted to the National Incident Data Repository for Community Pharmacies (NIDR) from Nova Scotia since 2010.

Funding support provided by Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada. © 2025 ISMP Canada