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NorQuest College Pharmacy Technician Diploma program receives national accreditation; a first for Alberta

EDMONTON – The Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs has granted provisional accreditation, the highest accreditation available, to NorQuest College's two-year Pharmacy Technician Diploma program. This is the only pharmacy technician program in Alberta with national accreditation. The provisional accreditation is for a three-year term that runs from 2008 – 2011.

"The accreditation is an extremely positive development for graduates of this program," says Ruth Hunter-Moffatt, Dean, Health and Human Service Careers at NorQuest College. "It means our graduates possess the skills to meet national standards and their credentials will be nationally recognized."

The NorQuest College Pharmacy Technician Diploma program prepares students to work in hospitals, retail pharmacies, insurance agencies, and for pharmaceutical companies. NorQuest graduates, under the supervision of a pharmacist, help to fill prescriptions, prepare compounded medications, prepare sterile products, repackage pharmaceuticals, and provide customer care.

"As the role of the pharmacy technician grows in both scope and importance, finding technicians with the proper skills, knowledge and training is essential," says Ross McKay, Executive Vice President Operations and Chief Operating Officer for Medicine Shoppe Canada. "The provisional accreditation granted to NorQuest College provides a measure of assurance to the industry that NorQuest graduates are meeting national pharmacy technician education standards."

"NorQuest's program accreditation is an important step in the journey of the Alberta College of Pharmacists, Alberta's pharmacists and pharmacy technicians as we work towards the regulation of pharmacy technicians and opportunities to enhance patient care in Alberta," says Greg Eberhart, registrar for the Alberta College of Pharmacists.

Hunter-Moffat says, "Through modifications to NorQuest's curriculum, student assessments and teaching practices, this accreditation validates how our program is responding to the ever-changing role of pharmacy technicians."

NorQuest College serves around 10,000 students each year through full-time, part-time and regional programs in communities across Alberta. In addition to health care, allied health, human services, business and industry career programs, NorQuest offers expertise in adult literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), intercultural education, Aboriginal education, academic upgrading, and learner supports for students with disabilities. For more information, visit www.norquest.ca.

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