



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

New Database Helps Doctors Spend Less Time on Paperwork, More Time with Patients

July 31, 2026

St. John's, NL – The Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association (NLMA) is pleased to announce the launch of the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP) Criteria Database. Developed in collaboration with the Department of Health and Community Services, the provincial Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and eDOCSNL (the provincial EMR program), this initiative marks a significant step forward in reducing paperwork and administrative burden for physicians.

Funding for the NLPDP Criteria Database Integration in Med Access was made possible through the Canadian Medical Association, MD Financial Management Inc., and Scotiabank as part of the [*Health Care Unburdened Grant program*](#).

The NLPDP helps to cover the cost of certain medications for eligible residents. Some of these medications are only covered under specific criteria and require a *special authorization* request from a prescriber. The new NLPDP Criteria Database will enable physicians to access NLPDP coverage information while prescribing or reviewing medications at the point of care. It achieves this by displaying special authorization criteria directly within Med Access – the provincial electronic medical record (EMR) used by community-based physicians and other health care professionals.

The integration of the NLPDP Criteria Database with the provincial EMR will make it easier for prescribers to determine whether a drug is covered by NLPDP, if it is subject to limitations, or if it is interchangeable with other medications. For medications that need special authorization, the system links physicians to the right forms directly within their EMR. If a form isn't available, it provides guidance to prescribers on next steps. By bringing all of this information in one place, physicians can avoid time-consuming tasks like searching for the correct forms or manually verifying NLPDP coverage criteria. This adds valuable time back to their day so they can spend more time focusing on patient care.

NLPDP is also implementing a portal for physicians and other prescribers who do not use the Med Access EMR, which is planned to launch later this fall. The portal will allow prescribers to complete and track special authorization requests, which along with updates to the Tamper Resistant Prescription Pad Program through the recent amendments to the *Pharmaceutical Services Act*, will support continued efforts to reduce administrative burden for prescribers. Pharmacists are currently using this portal. The NLMA and NL Health Services are also in discussions to incorporate the NLPDP Criteria Database into CorCare.

To evaluate the positive benefits of this initiative, the NLMA will measure how long it takes physicians to access special authorization criteria before and after launch. Early estimates suggest the time could be reduced from about five minutes to under one minute.

This initiative reflects a continued commitment by the NLMA and its partners to reduce administrative burden on physicians and improve the overall efficiency of patient care in Newfoundland and Labrador.

“At a time when many physicians are experiencing increased administrative burden, this is a meaningful step toward simplifying prescribing workflows and reducing some of that strain. While modest, it represents a practical improvement in their day-to-day practice.”

Dr. David Metcalfe
NLMA President

“On behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, I thank the NL Medical Association for all their work on this initiative. The Department of Health and Community Services was happy to collaborate with them on the Prescription Drug Program Criteria Database to help reduce administrative burden on physicians. Reducing barriers physicians face in their everyday practice helps strengthen our health care system and improve health outcomes for all of us.”

Honourable Lela Evans
Minister of Health and Community Services

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