

SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR DISPENSERS, TECHNICIANS, ASSOCIATE TECHNOLOGISTS, AND TECHNOLOGISTS (DISPENSING TECHNOLOGY)

1. Introduction

Under the provisions of Section 41 (Overriding Effect) of the Allied Health Professionals Council Act, 2022, read with Sections 2(a), 2(l), 4(2), 16, 17, 20, 25, 26, and Schedule-I of the Act, and in accordance with Article 143 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Allied Health Professionals Council (AHPC), acting on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, hereby defines and regulates the scope of practice for Dispensers, Technicians, Associate Technologists, and Technologists. These professionals may establish and operate licensed healthcare establishments in the public and private sectors nationwide, in accordance with applicable laws and regulatory requirements. This framework sets out their professional responsibilities, competencies, and limits of practice in the delivery of healthcare services, ensuring patient safety, ethical conduct, and compliance with applicable legal and regulatory frameworks.

2. Definitions

In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) "Act" means the Allied Health Professionals Council Act, 2022.
- (b) "Council" or "AHPC" means the Allied Health Professionals Council established under the Act.
- (c) "Dispenser" means a person registered under the Act as an Allied Health Professional and authorized to dispense medicines in healthcare establishments.
- (d) "Dispensing" means dispensing medicines specified in the relevant schedules and in accordance with applicable law, prescription requirements, and these Regulations.
- (e) "Prescription" means an order by a registered medical practitioner or other legally authorized prescriber for the supply of medicines to a patient.
- (f) "CPD" means Continuous Professional Development undertaken to maintain and enhance professional competence for renewal of registration or licence.
- (g) "Basic Emergency Medical Care" means provision of basic emergency care, first aid, recognition of emergencies, and Basic Life Support (BLS) by a Dispenser.
- (h) "Bridging Programs" mean structured educational programs enabling registered allied health professionals to upgrade qualifications and competencies, in accordance with standards prescribed by AHPC.



(i) **“Medication Application”** means the process of delivering medications to patients through all recognized clinical routes – including oral, inhalational, injectable, topical, transdermal, nasal, ophthalmic, otic, rectal, vaginal, and enteral – in clinical practice.

(j) **“Assessment of Side Effects”** means the systematic observation, evaluation, documentation, and reporting of adverse or unexpected reactions to medicines.

(k) **“License”** means a valid authorization issued by AHPC in the relevant category of practice.

(l) **“Dispenser ”** means a registered allied health professional permitted to dispense and sell medicines, maintain stock records, ensure proper labelling, provide basic patient guidance, manage inventory, verify prescriptions, and support pharmacy operations in compliance with applicable safety and storage requirements.

3. Classification of Practitioners

3.1 Dispenser (SSC + 1-Year Certificate) A person holding a one-year Certificate in Dispenser Technology after SSC and authorized to perform entry-level dispensing, basic emergency care, and pharmacy support functions within the approved scope of practice.

3.2 Technician (SSC + Diploma / HSSC Level) A person holding a one-and-a-half to two-year Diploma or HSSC-level qualification in Dispenser Technology and authorized to perform dispensing, technical support, and basic emergency care functions within the approved scope of practice.

3.3 Associate Technologist (ADP Degree Level) A registered allied health professional holding an Associate Degree and authorized to provide technical and clinical services within the approved scope of practice.

3.4 Technologist (BS Degree Level) A degree-level professional trained in advanced dispensing, medication management, and patient counselling and authorized to perform higher-level and semi-autonomous dispensing functions within the approved scope of practice.

4. Registration and Licensure

4.1 Registration No person shall practise in the discipline of Dispenser Technology unless duly registered with the Council.

4.2 Licensure No person shall practise in the relevant category unless holding a valid licence issued by the Council.



4.3 Categories of Licence Licensure shall correspond to the qualification level recognized by the Council, including: (a) Dispenser (b) Technician (c) Associate Technologist; and (d) Technologist.

4.4 Bridging Qualifications A bridging qualification shall have effect only to the extent expressly recognized by the Council and shall not, by itself, confer a higher scope of practice unless corresponding registration and licensure are granted.

4.5 Validity Registration and licence shall remain valid for such period as may be prescribed by the Council, not exceeding three years unless otherwise notified.

4.6 Renewal Renewal shall be subject to payment of the prescribed fee, compliance with prescribed conditions, and fulfillment of CPD and other regulatory requirements.

4.7 Facility Licensure Registered Dispensers, Technicians, Associate Technologists, and Technologists, or higher qualification holders where recognized by law, may establish and operate healthcare establishments within their lawful professional scope, provided that the establishment holds the required AHPC facility licence and complies with all applicable legal, safety, ethical, and regulatory requirements.

5. Practice Settings Registered and licensed practitioners may practise, within their category and scope, in:

(a) government hospitals (b) private hospitals (c) community pharmacies and medical stores, where lawfully permitted (d) AHPC-licensed healthcare establishments, and (e) AHPC-licensed clinics, centres, or dispensaries.

6. Scope of Practice

6.1 Permissible Functions

Practitioners may, within their qualification level and lawful authority:

- (a) dispense and provide medicines in accordance with prescription, schedule, and law;
- (b) maintain dispensing records and verify prescriptions;
- (c) provide patient guidance on correct use, dosage, timing, precautions, side effects, interactions, and contraindications; and
- (d) record and report adverse drug reactions as required.

6.2 Providing Medicines Provide medications to patients according to prescription, through all recognized clinical routes, including oral, inhalational, injectable, topical, transdermal, nasal, ophthalmic, otic, and enteral routes, in clinical practice.



7. Core Responsibilities Of Dispensers (Certificate Level)

7.1 Role as Health Care Service Provider

- Dispensers are frontline allied health personnel who provide clinical services within their approved training, professional competencies, and authorized scope of practice, ensuring safe, accessible, and continuous patient care in clinics, hospitals, and dispensaries in public or private sector of the country.

7.2 Professional Functions

- Dispensers may perform the following functions as authorized their scope of practice:
- Dispense medicines to patients strictly according to prescriptions issued by a registered medical practitioner, ensuring accuracy in dosage, quantity, labelling, and instructions.
- Interpret and verify prescriptions for completeness, clarity, and accuracy, and refer any discrepancies or uncertainties to the prescribing practitioner or supervising pharmacist.
- Prepare, measure, label, and package medicines, including tablets, capsules, syrups, ointments, and other pharmaceutical preparations, in accordance with standard dispensing practices and applicable regulations.
- Perform basic pharmaceutical calculations to ensure accurate preparation and dispensing of medicines.
- Provide basic guidance to patients regarding the proper use, dosage schedules, storage conditions, and precautions of medicines while maintaining patient confidentiality.
- Dispense and applied medicines as a qualified healthcare professional in accordance with approved safety protocols where applicable.
- Providing basic healthcare services, including first aid, patient preparation, and general patient care where appropriate and within their training curriculum.
- Manage procurement, storage, inventory control, and stock rotation of medicines; monitor expiry dates and ensure safe disposal of expired or damaged medicines.
- Maintain accurate records of prescriptions, dispensed medicines, patient registers, and inventory records in manual or electronic systems.
- Follow hygiene, sterilization, and infection prevention protocols to maintain a safe and clean dispensing environment.



- Operate and maintain dispensing equipment and ensure the proper functioning of tools used in pharmaceutical dispensing.
- Provide healthcare services for smooth functioning of healthcare establishments such as clinics, dispensaries, hospitals, and community health centres.
- Report adverse drug reactions, medication errors, stock shortages, or unusual patient responses to the supervising practitioner or relevant healthcare authority.
- Provide basic first aid and emergency services where necessary and promptly escalate critical situations to appropriate healthcare professionals.

8. Professional Conduct and Compliance

Practitioners shall:

- (a) maintain professional ethics and patient confidentiality;
- (b) follow national healthcare laws, regulations, and institutional policies; and
- (c) comply with registration, licensing, and professional standards established by AHPC.

9. Technicians (SSC + Diploma / HSSC / Bridging Certification Level)

Technicians may perform the following, within their approved scope and under required supervision where applicable:

- Assist technologists, and other healthcare professionals in performing routine technical and clinical procedures within the scope of their training.
- Operate and maintain basic medical, laboratory, or technical equipment according to established protocols and safety standards.
- Prepare patients for procedures, tests, or treatments by explaining basic instructions and ensuring proper positioning and safety.
- Collect, label, transport, and store specimens (where applicable) according to standard operating procedures and infection control guidelines.
- Provide basic first aid and emergency services where necessary and promptly escalate critical situations to appropriate healthcare professionals.
- Maintain accurate records of procedures performed, patient information, and technical data in registers or electronic systems as required.
- Follow infection control practices, sterilization procedures, and hygiene protocols to ensure a safe healthcare environment.



- Ensure proper cleaning, calibration, and basic maintenance of instruments and equipment used in the department.
- Provide technical support during diagnostic, therapeutic, or laboratory procedures under the supervision of qualified professionals.
- Perform duties in accordance with the policies, ethical standards, and regulations set by the **Allied Health Professionals Council (AHPC)** and the healthcare establishment.
- Work collaboratively with healthcare teams to support effective patient care and service delivery.
- Ensure patient safety by following standard protocols and immediately reporting any abnormal findings or equipment issues to the supervising technologist or physician.
- Participate in training sessions, workshops, and
- Activities to improve professional skills and knowledge.

10. Associate Technologists (ADP Degree / bridging Program Certification Level)

Associate Technologists may perform the following within their approved scope:

- Assist senior technologists and healthcare professionals in the delivery of clinical and diagnostic services within their approved scope of practice.
- Participate in patient assessment, monitoring, and care under supervision, ensuring safety and quality standards.
- Perform technical procedures, operate healthcare equipment, and maintain laboratory or clinical instruments according to standard protocols.
- Accurately record, maintain, and report patient data, test results, and clinical observations in compliance with confidentiality and ethical standards.
- Ensure adherence to infection control, safety guidelines, and professional standards within the healthcare facility.
- Engage in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities to maintain and enhance competencies.
- Work effectively within multidisciplinary healthcare teams, supporting operational and clinical workflows.



- Adhere to applicable laws, AHPC regulations, and facility policies governing allied health practice.

11. Technologists (BS Degree / bridging program certification Level)

Technologists may perform the following within their approved scope:

- Independently perform specialized diagnostic, therapeutic, and technical procedures as approved their scope of practice.
- Lead patient assessment, monitoring, and care processes, ensuring high standards of safety, accuracy, and quality.
- Operate, troubleshoot, and maintain complex healthcare and laboratory equipment; implement new technologies as per best practices.
- Analyze clinical and diagnostic data, prepare reports, and provide actionable insights to support patient care decisions.
- Develop, monitor, and enforce protocols for infection control, safety, and compliance with professional standards.
- Supervise, train, and mentor Associate Technologists, Technicians, and Dispensers, fostering professional growth.
- Engage in CPD activities to advance expertise, stay updated with innovations, and maintain professional licensure.
- Ensure full compliance with applicable laws, AHPC regulations, ethical standards, and institutional policies.
- Collaborate within multidisciplinary teams, contribute to decision-making, and support organizational objectives in healthcare delivery.

12. Medicines, Disposables Items, Dressing Materials and Lawful Authorization

12.1 General Rule Medicines shall be stocked, stored, handled, supplied, dispensed, sold, administered, or applied only in accordance with applicable law, valid prescription or other lawful authorization, approved protocols, institutional permission, and the practitioner's qualification and competence.



12.2 Permitted Medicines and Materials At the relevant qualification level, and subject to applicable law, valid prescription, approved formulary, institutional authorization, and demonstrated competence, the medicines, fluids, and consumables that may be handled, dispensed, supplied, administered, or applied, as applicable, may include, where clinically indicated and lawfully authorized:

Antibiotics, anti-tubercular medicines, antimalarial medicines, anti-diarrhoeal and anti-amoebic medicines, anthelmintic medicines, skin and dermatological preparations, anti-allergic medicines, ear and nasal drops, cough preparations and syrups, anti-asthmatic medicines, anti-hypertensive medicines, antacids, antispasmodic medicines, antiemetic medicines, laxatives, urinary alkalinizers, analgesic, antipyretic, and anti-rheumatic medicines, haematinics, intravenous fluids, anti-diabetic medicines, vitamins and dressing materials, bandages, disposable items, and related patient-care supplies.

12.3. Specially Regulated Medicines Sedatives, hypnotics, tranquilizers, anaesthetic agents, controlled substances, narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and other specially regulated medicines shall be handled only to the extent expressly permitted by applicable law and subject to any additional licensing, supervision, prescription, security, and record-keeping requirements.

12.4 Saving Clause Nothing in these Regulations shall be construed as authorizing any person to handle any medicine in contravention of drug-control, controlled-substance, poisons, narcotics, public-safety, or other applicable law

13. Competency Standards

Practitioners:

- (a) must hold an AHPC-recognized qualification appropriate to their level;
- (b) must be registered and licensed with AHPC;
- (c) where required, must work under appropriate supervision; and
- (d) must engage in CPD to maintain current knowledge and skills.



14. Ethical and Legal Obligations

Practitioners shall:

- (a) uphold patient confidentiality, dignity, and rights;
- (b) practise strictly within the scope permitted by the Act and these Regulations;
- (c) report unethical practices, illegal dispensing, or drug misuse; and
- (d) avoid negligence, misconduct, and unauthorized practice.

15. Regulatory Controls

Practitioners shall:

- (a) dispense medicines only against valid prescriptions or other lawful authorization;
- (b) maintain proper records of dispensed medicines, including patient and prescriber information, for the prescribed period; and
- (c) refrain from prohibited practices, including unlicensed dispensing, dispensing prescription medicines without valid prescription, and unauthorized compounding or substitution.

16. Inspection, Monitoring, and Compliance The Council, through its authorized inspectors, may inspect authorized premises, examine and verify relevant records, assess compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements, and take such lawful measures as may be necessary in relation to any unauthorized, unsafe, or unlawful practice.

17. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

- Mandatory annual CPD training: minimum five (05) days for Dispenser, Technicians, ten (10) days for Associate Technologists and fifteen (15) days for Technologists.
- **Training includes:**
 - New medicines and formulations;
 - Drug safety, adverse reactions, interactions;
 - Ethical dispensing practices;
 - Injection safety and emergency management;
 - Legal provisions for controlled substances.

18. Disciplinary Action

- AHPC may impose penalties, including warning, fine, suspension, or cancellation of license for misconduct, legal violation, or CPD non-compliance.

19. Essential Instruments

- Licensed Dispensers must maintain BP apparatus, stethoscope, thermometer, glucometer, nebulizer, scissors, forceps, torch, and other necessary instruments.



20. Appeal Mechanism in Disciplinary Actions

1. In pursuance of Section 25 of AHPC Act, 2022, any dispenser against whom disciplinary action is taken may file an appeal.
2. Appeal must be filed within **30 days** of receiving the order.
3. The appeal lies before the **Appellate Committee of AHPC**, comprising members not part of the original proceedings.
4. Decision of the Committee shall be issued within **60 days** of filing.
5. Decisions are final, subject to constitutional or judicial remedies available under law.

6. 21. Overriding Effect

21.1 Prevailing Effect These Regulations shall have effect in accordance with Section 41 of the AHPC Act, 2022.

21.2 Constitutional Position Where applicable, federal law shall prevail over inconsistent provincial law in accordance with Article 143 of the Constitution.

21.3 Extent of Supersession These Regulations shall supersede conflicting provisions of other laws only to the extent of any inconsistency and only insofar as such supersession is lawfully sustainable.

