

Practice-Ready Assessment routes for specialists

Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, and Nova Scotia, summarized

PATHWAY

Practice-Ready Assessment, specialists

SOURCE

MCC e-book, adapted

LAST REVIEWED

July 2026

PREPARED BY

Filipe Santos, MD

This guide summarizes the Practice-Ready Assessment (PRA) routes open to internationally trained specialists in Canada. It is the take-away companion to the specialists section of the interactive guides at filipesantosmd.com, and it is adapted from the e-book Physician Licensing in Canada, which I wrote for the Medical Council of Canada (MCC).

THE SHORT VERSION

Only four provinces run a PRA route for specialists: Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. Each is built around sponsorship or a job offer in a specialty the province needs. Before anything else, confirm that your specialty is in demand in the province and that your training compares with the Canadian standard for your discipline.

1 How this relates to the Royal College route

The Practice Eligibility Route (PER) leads to certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and is covered in the Interactive PER Guide at filipesantosmd.com/per-guide.html. A provincial Practice-Ready Assessment for specialists is a separate, province-run route to a licence. Nova Scotia's program is aimed specifically at specialists whose training comes from a jurisdiction outside the 29 accepted by the Royal College. Some provinces, such as Manitoba, still tie their program to Royal College certification or eligibility, so read the two routes together before you choose.

2 Program snapshots, province by province

These follow the order used in the source e-book. Full requirements and application steps are on each regulator's website.

ALBERTA

Practice Readiness Assessment (PRA-AB) for specialists

Exams	A registration exam: the MCCQE, or the complete United States Medical Licensing Examination as an equivalent. A partial USMLE is not accepted.
Training	Discipline-specific specialty training equivalent to Royal College standards, with specialist certification.
Currency	At least 1 year of recent practice or postgraduate training in the intended specialty within the last 3 years.
Structure	Two parts of 12 weeks each: a preliminary clinical assessment, then a probationary assessment, leading to the Provisional Register. Sponsorship is secured through DoctorJobsAlberta.com.

MANITOBA

Practice-ready assessment for specialists

Credentials	Qualifications for independent specialty practice in the jurisdiction where you trained, with accredited postgraduate clinical training in the specialty, and Royal College certification or confirmed eligibility, member board certification or eligibility, or certification from the Collège des médecins du Québec.
Sponsorship	An approved sponsor and a job offer in a specialty in high need in Manitoba, plus a practice supervisor and mentor arrangement.
Structure	A minimum 3-month approved assessment in the specialty, leading to provisional (specialty practice-limited) registration. Applications expire 6 months from receipt, so confirm sponsorship before applying.

QUEBEC

Restrictive permit, specialists

Exams	MCCQE or the United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 2 CK, plus French proficiency (Office québécois de la langue française examination or accepted proof).
Training	Postgraduate training generally equivalent to Quebec's requirements for the specialty (4 to 6 years), with a specialist's certificate or equivalent, and 12 months of competent practice in the field within the last 3 years.
Structure	Sponsorship through Recrutement Santé Québec, then a 12-week assessment preceded by a week of observation. The permit is limited to institutions, renewed annually, and convertible to a regular permit later. The process averages 9 to 18 months.

NOVA SCOTIA

Practice Ready Assessment for Specialists

Who it is for	Specialists with training and certification from a jurisdiction other than the 29 accepted by the Royal College.
Requirements	Canadian citizenship or legal entitlement to live and work in Canada, postgraduate training substantively equivalent in duration to Canadian programs in the primary specialty, at least 3 years of unsupervised independent practice as the most responsible physician, and currency of practice in the 3 years before applying.
Structure	Joint recommendation by the health authority and the relevant Dalhousie University department, then a Clinical Assessment licence for the assessment period. Gathering the documentation takes about 6 months.

3 Your next steps

This month

- ☐ Open a physiciansapply.ca account and start source verification of your degree, specialty training, and certification.
- ☐ Compare your training with the Canadian standard for your discipline using the Royal College Specialty Training Requirements.
- ☐ Check demand for your specialty on the provincial job boards: [DoctorJobsAlberta.com](https://doctorjobs.alberta.com), [Health Careers Manitoba](https://healthcareersmanitoba.com), and [Recrutement Santé Québec](https://recrutement.sante-quebec.ca). Sponsorship is the gate in every province.

Next

- ☐ Decide how the provincial PRA route fits alongside the Royal College's Practice Eligibility Route for your specialty, and sequence the two deliberately.
- ☐ Confirm the current requirements with the regulator before spending on exams. Rules change, sometimes without notice.
- ☐ For Quebec, plan the French requirement early. It is the longest lead-time item for most candidates.

4 Resources

The Interactive PER Guide	The Royal College route for specialists, stage by stage, with the specialty training requirements. filipesantosmd.com/per-guide.html
The licensing guide	Supervised practice roles and family medicine PRA programs, province by province. filipesantosmd.com/licensing-guide.html
The source e-book	Physician Licensing in Canada, the free MCC e-book this guide is adapted from. mcc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Physician-licensing-in-Canada.pdf
physiciansapply.ca	The MCC portal for source verification and applications for medical registration. physiciansapply.ca
1:1 consultation	If you want this mapped to your own CV and specialty, book a consultation. filipesantosmd.com/book-a-consultation.html

Your specialty and the province's need decide this route. Confirm both before you build the plan around it.

Filipe Santos, MD
PATH TO PRACTICE SERIES

This guide is provided for educational purposes and summarizes publicly available information from Canadian medical regulatory authorities, adapted from the e-book Physician Licensing in Canada published by the Medical Council of Canada. Requirements change frequently and vary by province, other factors may be considered in individual cases, and the final decision on eligibility and licensure always rests with each regulator and program. Confirm current details with the relevant bodies before acting.