



Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia
Attn.: Amy Wagg, Director of Communicatoinis

September 23th, 2013
Via email: to amy@pans.ns.ca <mailto:bmacdonald@unsm.ca>

Dear Ms Wagg:

On behalf of Premier Darrell Dexter, Leader of the New Democratic Party, please find attached the NDP response to your questions on issues of importance to the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia.

I very much appreciate your taking the time to bring these concerns forward. I can assure you that the NDP values its constructive relationship with PANS.

The NDP platform in this election has seven key commitments; I hope that your members can take a moment to review them at <http://nsndp.ca/platform>.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to outline the NDP's positions on these important issues.

Best regards,

Dan O'Connor

Dan O'Connor
Chief of Staff to Premier Darrell Dexter
Leader, Nova Scotia New Democratic Party



PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA – PROVINCIAL ELECTION 2013

- 1) HOW WOULD YOUR GOVERNMENT SUPPORT A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH (WORKING WITH THE PHARMACY ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA AND ITS MEMBER PHARMACISTS) TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT PHARMACY SERVICES FOR ALL NOVA SCOTIANS THAT WOULD IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES IN MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE WAYS?

Patients need their health-care providers to be working together to ensure they get the care they need. But traditional health care hasn't always encouraged a team approach. The NDP believes that encouraging collaboration begins even before health professionals enter the work force.

That is why the NDP government supported the construction of a new building for future doctors, kinesiologists, pharmacists and nurse practitioners to be ready for fall 2015 at Dalhousie University. Students will learn together just as they will work together to help their patients after graduation, which will ultimately lead to better diagnoses, better treatment, and ultimately better outcomes for patients in Nova Scotia.

The NDP has focused on collaborative practice and expanded scope of practice for all health professionals – through innovative new care options like Collaborative Emergency Centres and expanded services like flu shots provided through pharmacies, as well as legislation authorizing the network of self-regulated professions. This focus will continue through new programs like nurse managed clinics which will incorporate team work, including community pharmacists, into a model to provide better care for Nova Scotians

- 2) UNDER CURRENT GOVERNMENT POLICY, LIMITED ADVANCED PHARMACY SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO A SMALL PERCENT OF NOVA SCOTIANS THROUGH PUBLICLY FUNDED PROGRAMS. WOULD YOUR GOVERNMENT SUPPORT EXPANDING THE FUNDING FOR PHARMACISTS PROVIDED SERVICES FOR ALL NOVA SCOTIANS? WHAT ADDITIONAL ADVANCED PHARMACY SERVICES WOULD YOUR GOVERNMENT FUND?

New services and expanded scope of practice are relatively new to Nova Scotia. The NDP made changes to regulations this year that allow pharmacists to give flu shots, and administer other drugs such as travel vaccines, which customers pay for. The regulations also give pharmacists the authority to order and interpret tests to help manage a person's drug therapy, such as blood tests to monitor and

adjust the dose of blood thinners. Changes are not happening overnight, but they are being accomplished in a balanced and sustainable way through consultation.

3) WHAT ROLES DO YOU THINK PHARMACIES AND PHARMACISTS SHOULD PLAY IN THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE IN NOVA SCOTIA AND IMPROVING PATIENT CARE? HOW WOULD YOUR GOVERNMENT SUPPORT THIS?

Pharmacists are trusted advisors for patients and they need to be recognized and valued as the front line health care workers they are. The NDP has supported this and has changed legislation, regulations and funding to reflect it. A bill passed by the NDP in 2011, allow licensed pharmacy technicians to dispense certain types of prescriptions and do more technical work under the direction of pharmacists. This gives pharmacists more time to focus on counseling patients and ensure medications are prescribed safely and appropriately to Nova Scotians.

4) WHAT MEASURES WOULD YOUR GOVERNMENT TAKE TO ENSURE PHARMACISTS ARE ABLE TO WORK TO THEIR FULL SCOPE OF PRACTICE?

Jurisdictions across Canada are learning from each other about best practices. And the organizations representing health professionals, like PANS, have innovative ideas about what possibilities are out there to provide better patient care. According to information provided by the Canadian Pharmacists Association, Nova Scotia now offers among the broadest scopes of practice in the country. The NDP will work with pharmacists to determine what further services can be included.

5) WHAT INITIATIVES WOULD YOUR GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENT TO ENSURE A HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE PHARMACY NETWORK IN NOVA SCOTIA?

The NDP is encouraging more collaboration between health professionals and is committed to involving pharmacists in collaborative practice initiatives which will strengthen pharmacy services across the province. Other provincial programs like the Drug Information Network help patients and pharmacists by providing a complete, up-to-date list of a patient's medications.

As well, prescribers will be able to see immediately what prescriptions patients already have, which can help avoid overprescribing, especially important in dealing with narcotics and other regulated drugs. PANS, as an active partner, will have other ideas to help provide better care and the NDP welcomes that input.