

1. For the past four years, the relationship between the NDP government and the pharmacy profession has been strained. Legislation was passed without simultaneously negotiating a tariff agreement. Once the agreement was negotiated and signed, pharmacists were unable to provide enhanced services due to either government's inability or unwillingness to produce policies which would have made these services publicly available. A Liberal government would re-establish a joint working group with the Pharmacy Association in order to maximize the benefits that can be achieved by better utilizing pharmacists without causing any more instability in this vital and accessible health care sector.
2. The Nova Scotia Liberal Party worked to ensure senior medication reviews were available in this province. A new Liberal government will ensure medication reviews are modernized and done properly. Today, only seniors on multiple prescriptions qualify for the review. To make matters worse, this NDP government charge seniors a fee (the co-pay) to have their medications reviewed. Beyond ensuring more seniors are able to participate, we need to look at other settings where they can be performed – i.e. nursing homes and whether certain chronic diseases such as diabetes should be reviewed for adherence. Other provinces are doing this and are saving their health care systems money. Perhaps the biggest disappointment with this NDP government was their unwillingness to implement a policy to allow pharmacists to administer flu vaccines. Since passing legislation three years ago, pharmacists will, for the first time this flu season, be able to administer flu vaccines at a lower cost to our system. The problem is that pharmacists have only been allocated 5% of the vaccine supply - once their stock is depleted, pharmacies will either need to get more vaccine from other pharmacies or go to the Public Health Office. This is clearly poor planning and execution on the part of the NDP government and a Liberal government will ensure this never happens again.
3. Pharmacists are among the most accessible health care professionals and as a result are often the first contact for patients when experiencing problems with managing medications or their disease. Pharmacists are medication experts. They have the knowledge and training to advise their patients on the proper use of medications and how to properly manage side-effects. They are uniquely positioned to provide an enhanced service to Nova Scotians that will not only benefit our health care system with immediate cost savings, but will reduce pressures on other segments of our health care system; namely emergency rooms, the acute care sector and our primary health care system. An investment in pharmacy will yield great returns not only for our health care system but for Nova Scotians as well. The Liberal Party values the role pharmacists play

in our health care system and a new Liberal government will ensure that we work in partnership with pharmacists moving forward. There are immense opportunities by making an investment back into the pharmacy profession which will yield a more cost effective, patient-focused health care system. The benefits far outweigh the costs.

4. Many legislative changes have been passed which go a long way to expanding the pharmacists scope of practice in our province. Nova Scotia needs a government that recognizes that in order for pharmacists to deliver more accessible health care to Nova Scotians, an investment will be required back into pharmacy. Data obtained from the Department of Health and Wellness shows that government saved about \$19 million over the last three fiscal years in the seniors' pharmacare program yet we have had very little, if any of this money reinvested to save the healthcare system more money.

5. There are several initiatives currently before government that should be implemented. While the NDP government had these opportunities previously presented to them, they have not seen fit to move forward. Included in these initiatives is the mental health care pharmacy program which targets adherence rates for patients with mental illness; a trial prescription program and treatment for minor ailments. A Liberal government will sit down with PANS and all other pertinent stakeholders for the purpose of moving forward with implementation. There are tremendous opportunities to create a more accessible and sustainable health care system by working with pharmacists. A Liberal government will partner with pharmacists to ensure they are utilized to their full scope of practice.