



NOVA SCOTIA ELECTION 2021 KEY MESSAGES

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are the most accessible healthcare providers in the province. With more than 300 community pharmacists located from Yarmouth to Neil's Harbour, 79% of Nova Scotians live with 5 km of a pharmacy and 40% live within walking distance. Pharmacies are open extended hours in the evenings and on weekends.

Access to healthcare in Nova Scotia is a growing problem. More than 65,000 people are without a family physician, and the wait times to see those physicians are increasing. Pharmacy is able to increase accessibility through a variety of pharmacy services (e.g. prescription renewals, minor ailment assessments, assessing and prescribing for contraception management, chronic disease management, therapeutic substitution, prescription adaptation, deprescribing, vaccinations, injections, and more).

Fund all publicly funded healthcare services that are provided by any practitioner who provides the service for any Nova Scotian. Currently, many pharmacy services are not covered by MSI, such as many of the Minor Ailment Conditions, therapeutic substitutions, and adaptations. Notwithstanding phenomenal success, the Community Pharmacist-led Anticoagulation Management Service (CPAMS) project has not advanced beyond the original pilot pharmacies.

Pharmacy can fill the gap when there is no doctor available but also frees up physician time for patients with more complex concerns, potentially enabling physicians to take on larger rosters.

Using pharmacy to its full capacity results in better health outcomes for patients and savings for the healthcare system. Government needs to move in this direction.

Pharmacies can help increase immunization rates in the province. We have seen the success of the Flu and COVID-19 Vaccine Programs. We could do more with access to publicly funded vaccines.

91% of Nova Scotians say pharmacy plays an essential role in the healthcare system, but the government has failed to fully integrate pharmacy into the system. While pharmacists have the authority to order lab tests, the government has been slow to provide the IT credentials to do so. This leads to delay in patient care.

One Patient/One Record must include all healthcare providers, including pharmacists. Access to information quickly and efficiently is the key to collaboration and improved patient care. A centralized database such as One Patient/One Record is a vital tool for healthcare providers but pharmacy and must become a key priority for Government.