



**Neighbourhood
Pharmacy**
Association of Canada

Association canadienne
**des pharmacies
de quartier**

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October 6, 2019

Andrew Scheer
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada
1720-130 Albert St.
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4

Dear the Honourable Andrew Scheer,

The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada (Neighbourhood Pharmacies) represents Canada's leading pharmacy organizations who deliver high value, quality care to Canadians in all models including chain, banner, long-term care, specialty and independent pharmacies as well as grocery chains and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. Our members are home to the most trusted providers of drug therapies, pharmacy-based patient services and innovative health care solutions, and hold significant value for middle class and struggling Canadians. A recent series of reports by the Conference Board of Canada concluded that the pharmacy sector generated more than \$16 billion in economic activity and supported nearly 250,000 high-quality jobs in 2016.

We see this election as a critical juncture for the future of health care in Canada. Indeed, your Party has expressed a broad-reaching vision and commitment to improve wait times and give Canadians more help for their health, so they can get ahead. There are many decision points looming on the horizon – and Neighbourhood Pharmacies shares your concern around access and wait times as vital aspects of health care delivery. We want to support Canadians in making an informed decision at the ballot box. To do so, we are asking each Party Leader to answer the following questions which we will share with members:

- 1) Neighbourhood Pharmacies believes all Canadians deserve access to medications without financial barriers. Our proposal to *Complete the Plan* would bring all uninsured Canadians under one affordable public drug plan that will help the people who need it most, keep costs down, and avoid disrupting current coverage. If your Party forms the government, what would be the preferred payer model for pharmacare to be implemented following successful negotiations with the provinces and territories?

- 2) Ensuring accessibility to affordable medicines and protecting Canadians from drug shortages should be the first priority of government in establishing a national pharmacare plan. Recent comments made by several U.S. Governors stand to put the accessibility of affordable medicines in Canada at risk. What measures would you take to protect Canada's pharmaceutical supply from U.S. legislation that could disrupt and negatively impact patient care through drug shortages?
- 3) Communities across Canada are faced with an increasing opioid crisis yet have limited treatment options and tools to combat the problem. What measures would you take to address the key factors creating the conditions for this crisis while delivering harm-reduction programs that tackle opioid dependency through more effective pain and medication management services?
- 4) Since cannabis has been made available for adult use in Canada, we are seeing an increasing number of people driven to the adult-use market. Having access to medicinal cannabis through pharmacies is an important way to support patients, particularly by providing counselling and education to achieve the best possible health outcomes. What plans do you have to ensure access to cannabis for medicinal purposes is maintained in a way that continues to support patients who incorporate medicinal cannabis as part of their approach to managing health?

We respectfully ask for responses by 5:00 pm, EST on October 11, 2019 at which time we will share with our members. Replies can be sent to shanna@neighbourhoodpharmacies.ca.

Respectfully,



Sandra Hanna
Interim CEO
Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada