



**Neighbourhood
Pharmacy**
Association of Canada

Association canadienne
**des pharmaciens
de quartier**

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Hon. Cameron Friesen
Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living
302 Legislature Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

E-mail: minhsal@leg.gov.mb.ca

Dear Minister Friesen,

The COVID-19 crisis in Manitoba has the potential to create extraordinary circumstances in many industries. The greatest impact, however, is on our healthcare system. As pharmacists, we are trusted by Manitobans. The pharmacist is quite often the first point of contact in our provincial healthcare system. Pharmacists are important frontline health and primary care providers. Pharmacists are uniquely positioned to mitigate the stress currently placed on physician offices, and a trusted, accessible and reliable resource to Manitobans during these unprecedented times.

While we recognize that nurses and doctors should have priority in accessing childcare, pharmacists are also an integral part of front-line healthcare. To alleviate the pressure on the healthcare system it is essential that pharmacists continue to provide a high level of care to Manitobans, and ensure that Manitobans have access to the medicines they need. To do that many Manitoban pharmacists require childcare support. It is our ask that as childcare centres are re-opened, pharmacists are a profession able to access these childcare spaces.

We would also like to address the opportunity to further unlock capacity in the healthcare system. As you may know, the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada has postponed licensing exams this year, which will result in an entire cohort of new graduates not being licensed during this critical time. Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada proposes that the Manitoba government enables the College of Pharmacists in Manitoba to conditionally license new graduates to practice. This added capacity would mitigate some of the potential workforce challenges pharmacies are likely to face over the coming months due to illness or self-isolation.

Should you wish to discuss this further, we would be happy to make ourselves available.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hanna', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sandra Hanna, RPh.
Chief Executive Officer
Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada

The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada advocates for pharmacies' role in caring for Canadians – behind the counter and in front of it. As the healthcare needs and expectations of Canadians are constantly evolving, we connect our members to the tools and information needed to keep pace. We support the full range of Canadian pharmacies, including chain, banner, long-term care and specialty pharmacies, as well as grocery chains and mass merchandisers with pharmacies, with a focus on improving the delivery of care. We aim to advance healthcare for all Manitobans by leveraging over 420 pharmacies conveniently located in neighbourhoods across the province as integral points of patient care.