



Suite 203, 85 Thorburn Road  
St. John's, NL A1B 3M2

Telephone: (709) 753-7881  
Toll Free: (866) 753-7881  
email@panl.net • www.PANL.net

January 26, 2021

Hon. Andrew Furey  
Leader, Liberal Party  
Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador

Dear Premier Furey,

The Pharmacists' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL) represents more than 960 hospital, community, and academic pharmacists, pharmacy students and pharmacies. With more than 200 pharmacies throughout the province, pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers available to meet the healthcare needs of the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

PANL was quite pleased with the fact that a significant portion of your Fall leadership campaign focused on your commitment to the province's economic recovery and leading transformational change. A key action to achieving these goals is rethinking how money is allocated and ensuring that where high levels of spending are required, for example in health care, that decisions are efficient and cost-effective. Compared to all other Canadian provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest health care spending and the worst health outcomes. We believe pharmacists are an untapped resource that will help transform the healthcare system, improve patient outcomes, and decrease expenditures.

Pharmacists in Newfoundland and Labrador are able to deliver a broader range of services compared to just a few years ago. By providing services such as adapting and renewing prescriptions, prescribing and administering vaccinations, identifying opportunities to deprescribe potentially harmful and unnecessary medications and assessing/prescribing for minor ailments, our pharmacists are doing more for their patients than ever before. However, there is just so much more that pharmacists can do!

There is extensive evidence demonstrating that a full scope of pharmacist practice (e.g., pharmacist, assessment and prescribing for acute and chronic conditions like hypertension, diabetes, and urinary tract infections) can improve health outcomes and access to care, reduce pressure on the health care system, and decrease health care costs. For example, a full scope of pharmacist practice could contribute to filling the hypertension care gap, not simply in a cost-effective manner, but in a cost-savings manner. It is estimated that government could realize \$335 million in savings with full pharmacist intervention compared with usual care. Please see the attached papers for more information.

Commissioner Romanow, nearly 20 years ago, highlighted the need to transform healthcare delivery by developing new models of primary health care that reflect the expertise, education, and training of all healthcare providers. Action should be taken to ensure pharmacists are included in primary health care reform, as team-based primary care pharmacists - working collaboratively with other healthcare

professionals - contribute to optimal prevention and management of disease, rational medication use, and cost-effective care. Furthermore, greater involvement of pharmacists in primary care has been shown to increase health care capacity, enhance the patient experience of care, and improve the experience and satisfaction of other health care providers.

By reducing hospitalization and emergency room visits and increasing capacity in primary care, pharmacists are the key to a more sustainable health care system. Government support for regulatory changes enabling pharmacists to practice to their full scope would increase the accessibility of health care delivery at a lower cost. Further, changes to the reimbursement model for pharmacist-delivered care and health services—to ensure patients are not required to pay out of pocket—will improve access to care and health outcomes.

**Will the Liberal party, if elected, provide the support described above?**

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you prior to the upcoming provincial election to discuss the critical role of pharmacists in achieving an efficient and sustainable healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador. If a meeting is not possible, we request that you provide a written response outlining your support for expanding and optimizing the role of pharmacists in the provincial healthcare system and specifically answer the following questions. Responses will be shared with our members before they cast their votes.

1. Will your party support regulatory changes that enable pharmacists to practice to their full scope?
2. Will your party take immediate action to integrate pharmacists into the delivery of publicly funded primary health care in our province?

Sincerely,



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Janice Audeau  
President, Pharmacists' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador

*Encl:*  
Benefits of Pharmacist Care in Hypertension in Newfoundland and Labrador

Pharmacist Prescribing and Care Improves Cardiovascular Risk but is it Cost-Effective? A Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of the RxEACH Study

Outcomes of UTI Management by Pharmacists (RxOUTMAP). A Study of Pharmacist Prescribing and Care in Patients with Uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infections in the Community