Nova Scotia Pharmacies Limiting Prescription Fills to a 30-Day Supply

As part of the healthcare system’s overall response to the COVID-19 virus, the pharmacy regulatory body in Nova Scotia responsible for protecting the public’s health interest has asked pharmacists to restrict the dispensing of medications to a 30-day period for each prescription.

“This decision was not taken lightly,” says Beverley Zwicker, Registrar of the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists (NSCP). “During this health emergency, it is vital that we do everything we can to ensure patients get the medications they need and this is one of the ways we are doing that.”

The demand for prescription drugs resulting from the public feeling the need to stockpile medications was putting Nova Scotians at risk of increased drug shortages, and as such the NSCP was asked to intervene.

“Patients have been asking pharmacies to provide them with months more of their prescriptions than they would normally get at one time and our members have expressed growing concerns about being able to meet the demand for medications,” says Allison Bodnar, CEO of the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia. “We have worked closely with our partners at NSCP and Public Health to come up with this solution.”

This is a temporary measure designed to enable pharmacies to help ensure all Nova Scotians continue to have access to medications at this challenging time.

NSCP carefully considered the implications of this decision for the public in consultation with Public Health, government and those managing the province’s drug supply chain. The NSCP only took this action when it was evident that it was a necessary measure in order to protect the supply of drugs for all Nova Scotians.

There are costs incurred by pharmacies to dispense a prescription and these are covered by the dispensing fee. It is not reasonable to expect pharmacies to absorb these costs and continue to provide services during these extreme times.

“Pharmacies are following the directions designed for the public’s good and the compensation is reasonable,” says Ms. Zwicker.

Many of the measures being taken by Public Health and other healthcare system partners at this time are having a significant impact on individuals, however they are being taken for the protection of the public’s health and safety.

“We are all looking forward to being on the other side of this crisis. Until then, we ask for your patience and cooperation with this temporary measure,” says Ms. Zwicker.

-30-

For more information, contact:

Amy Wagg
Director of Communications, Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia
Email: amy@pans.ns.ca
Phone: (902) 422-9583 ext. 4