

## Professional Notice

**To:** Pharmacy Practitioners  
**From:** Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists  
**Date:** July 30, 2020  
**Re:** Mandatory Use of Non-Medical Masks in Community Pharmacies

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Effective July 31, 2020, the use of non-medical masks will be mandatory in indoor public spaces in Nova Scotia, including community pharmacies. **Public Health has clarified that community pharmacy staff are serving the public in an overall public space and need to wear masks, including when in the dispensary.**

As a trusted community healthcare provider who is in view of the public, it is important for pharmacy practitioners to be a positive role model in this critical public health strategy. Additional steps that pharmacies should take to support this Public Health measure include:

- Posting signs at the front door and by the dispensary to [encourage mask wearing](#) by members of the public and provide guidance on [how to wear a mask properly](#).
- If available, offering disposable masks to individuals who require pharmacy services and do not have a mask.
- Ensuring all pharmacy staff (dispensary and front store) understand the pharmacy's strategy for responding to individuals without masks to ensure that patients do not go without needed medication and access to healthcare. This is particularly important for patients who are accessing opioid agonist therapy (OAT).
- Encouraging members of the public to speak to pharmacy management if they are concerned about another customer who is not wearing a mask. Individuals can also be directed to contact the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (as per Public Health guidance).

### Masking: A Cooperative and Positive Approach

The province is taking a cooperative and positive approach to mandatory mask wearing by encouraging all Nova Scotians to comply with this measure. While businesses have been given the authority to refuse service to individuals who do not wear a mask, there is no requirement to do so. Pharmacies are not expected to question the legitimacy of a patient's assertion that they are unable to wear a mask. Pharmacies should establish a patient-centred strategy for responding to individuals without masks to ensure that patients do not go without needed medication and access to healthcare.

Wearing a mask is a critical measure in helping to minimize the impact of a potential second wave of COVID-19 in Nova Scotia. We all need to do our part to encourage colleagues and the public to wear masks whenever possible, and to follow Public Health's lead of promoting caring, common sense and community.