



## GUIDANCE

### Pharmacy Locations as Sites for Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing by Third-Party Entities

#### Introduction

Nova Scotia's approach to testing for COVID-19 continues to evolve as part of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure that the province continues to have adequate testing capacity to identify and contain the spread of COVID-19, third-party entities have been contracted to provide testing for asymptomatic individuals who require it for reasons other than being a contact of a known case (e.g. urgent work-related travel, students returning to home countries, those travelling to visit an ill or elderly relative).

As these third parties explore how to deliver this service across Nova Scotia, they have approached community pharmacies as a potential location to conduct testing. For clarity, pharmacy practitioners would not be conducting these tests; rather, pharmacies would be allowing a third-party entity to use a space in their pharmacy to conduct testing.

While the *Pharmacy Act* does not preclude this activity from taking place, it is in the public's health interest to establish safeguards so that the pharmacy location remains safe for both the public and pharmacy employees and so that the testing service does not become disruptive to the provision of pharmacy services.

#### Guidance

When a pharmacy enters into an agreement to provide space to a third-party entity to conduct asymptomatic testing for COVID-19 within the pharmacy, the pharmacy manager should:

- ensure that the third-party is acting in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (Public Health);
- take reasonable steps to ensure that the public is notified when asymptomatic COVID-19 testing is taking place on the premises (e.g., signage, social media);
- ensure that the testing does not interfere with the pharmacy's ability to continue to provide pharmacy services, in particular those services that require the use of a private consultation room;
- ensure that testing does not interfere with the pharmacy's ability to continue to provide a safe environment for pharmacy services, including that those waiting to be tested and the testing activity takes place in a designated area separate from the general public in the pharmacy, and that the testing environment is clean and safe for sample collection, conducting the test, and device and supply storage (if necessary);
- be satisfied that the third-party entity has established and follows policies and procedures for infection control that are consistent with Public Health guidance;

- be satisfied that the area used for testing is properly sanitized after being used for testing and before the area is used for other activities; **and**
- ensure that the pharmacy follows any direction that Public Health may provide should the test results for a person who was tested at the pharmacy be positive.