



**Neighbourhood
Pharmacy**
Association of Canada

Association canadienne
**des pharmacies
de quartier**

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Seamus O'Regan
Minister of Labour
House of Commons
Canada
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister O'Regan,

Re: Protection of Healthcare Workers

We are writing to you today to express our support for the proposed legislation to amend the Criminal Code to enhance protections for healthcare workers and ensure Canadians have safe and unobstructed access to health services.

The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada (Neighbourhood Pharmacies) is a national, not-for-profit trade association that represents the delivery of care of more than 11,000 community pharmacies – supported by 35,000 pharmacy professionals – across Canada serving as integrated healthcare hubs. Our purpose is to advocate for community pharmacy's potential to improve Canadians' health and contribute as sustainable partners to the shared vision of a robust, resilient health system.

We are particularly pleased to see pharmacies included in the list of organizations providing healthcare services. Like other healthcare workers, the pharmacy workforce has been subjected to demoralizing harassment and even abuse while providing care during the pandemic. And, as pharmacies provide some of the most accessible health care services available to Canadians, the pharmacy workforce is particularly vulnerable. Pharmacy teams deliver medication therapies, vaccinations, disease management support and innovative solutions in urban, rural, and remote communities, offering convenient and timely access to medications and services. Community pharmacies are the first and often most frequent point of contact patients have with the healthcare system. Pharmacies have kept their doors open since the beginning of the pandemic and have played a fundamental role in supporting public health efforts including administering close to 12 million doses COVID-19 vaccine across the country, supporting vaccine uptake efforts as well as taking on COVID-19 testing services. Protecting the mental health and wellbeing of our pharmacy workforce is vital to the sustained operation of pharmacy operations and their ability to provide care and services to Canadians.

All healthcare workers deserve to feel safe at their place of work. We welcome new federal laws making it a criminal offence to threaten any healthcare worker carrying out their professional duties, and any attempt to obstruct a patient accessing healthcare.

Sincerely,

Sandra Hanna, RPh
Chief Executive Officer

Cc:

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