



**Neighbourhood
Pharmacy**
Association of Canada

Association canadienne
**des pharmacies
de quartier**

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Dr. Theresa Tam
Chief Public Health Officer
Public Health Agency of Canada

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**Re: 2021 Report on the State of Public Health in Canada: ‘A Vision to Transform
Canada’s Public Health System’**

Dear Dr. Tam,

We read with interest your recent report on the State of Public Health in Canada. The Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada (Neighbourhood Pharmacies) supports your goal of strengthening Canada’s public health care system to be better equipped to manage health threats.

Neighbourhood Pharmacies is a national association representing pharmacy organizations with varied business models, including chain, banner, grocery, specialty, long-term care, and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. We leverage the diverse strength of our members and partners, including the pharmaceutical supply chain and manufacturers, and work together with a common policy objective to improve access to healthcare. 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 were hopeful that as you continue to lead a national dialogue on public health renewal, future reports and actions better recognize the enormous contribution the community pharmacy sector made to protecting Canadians’ health and wellbeing throughout the second year of the pandemic.

Like all of Canada’s healthcare workers, pharmacy team members are experiencing serious stress, burnout and staff shortages brought on by the pressures of the pandemic. We know that public acknowledgement of their tireless contributions by our most prominent public health leaders are meaningful, valued and go a long way in boosting morale at such a difficult time. As you contemplate ways to strengthen public health human resource capacity, pharmacists and pharmacy team members should not be absent from workforce planning.

Canada's pharmacies have offered accessible, critical support to patients and communities throughout the pandemic. Our doors have always remained open. Our pharmacy teams have collaborated with public health, primary care providers and governments to ensure the continuity of patient care, protect Canada’s medication supply, and provide essential COVID-19

vaccination and testing services. Pharmacies continue to lead on vaccination efforts, having administered more than 15 million vaccines to Canadians, and in some provinces are responsible for more than 50 per cent of all COVID-19 immunizations.

However, as we look ahead, there are many more opportunities to unlock the potential of pharmacy as a public health partner in communities across the country. Pharmacies are the first and often most frequent point of contact patients have with the healthcare system. Pharmacy teams deliver medication therapies, vaccinations, disease management support and innovative solutions in urban, rural, and remote communities. We can and want to help.

We look forward to contributing to national dialogue and collective action on public health renewal, would be pleased to meet with your team and to participate in consultative forums that will inform your work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hanna', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sandra Hanna
Chief Executive Officer

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