

**Nova Scotia Law Amendments Submission
Regarding Bill 17, Fair Drug Pricing Act**

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Presented by: Krista McClair**

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My name is Krista McClair. I am a pharmacist and a pharmacy owner. After graduating in 2000 my husband, Danny and I purchased Hutchins Pharmasave in the beautiful historic town of Annapolis Royal. Since graduating in 2000 I have seen my profession expand and grow. Moving from the city to a rural community I have been able to use so many more aspects of my training than before. Being a pharmacist is so much more than just “counting pills”. We play a critical role in first line treatment and assessment for many illnesses. Many patients find it easier to go into the Pharmacy and speak to their pharmacist before waiting in outpatients or for an appointment with their physician (if they have one). Many times we are able to assess, with our training, whether treatment at store level is warranted or assessment by a physician is necessary. Many of us pharmacists act as mediators between patients and doctors to help ensure the most optimal care plan.

Amongst many other things, we report allergies, failures of previous treatments, pediatric and geriatric dose checks and interactions of medications. Based on appropriate clinical evidence, we offer our professional recommendation of appropriate alternatives, or alternatives that may be covered by a patient’s drugplan. All of this requires time and services that have not been funded through government or private drug plans. Our current business model including professional allowances from commercial terms has in the most part allowed us to provide these and many other valuable services to our clients and community.

I choose to own my own pharmacy because I am passionate about my profession and my community. Some of the things I am currently able to offer to my community at no charge include: delivery service (due to the ruralness of our community some of these deliveries occur 40 km away) and wellness clinics providing testing of blood glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure. I also currently have an on staff nurse whom is trained in compression stocking fitting, mastectomy fitting, foot care and brace fitting. We have 5-8 hours of overlap for pharmacists on a daily basis allowing pharmacists to be able to spend more time with patients and to communicate with other health care professionals most notably physicians. We participate in community seminars offering drug related components working with

groups at the local medical centre coordinated by a dietician and local nurse practitioner.

I have been able to make improvements to my store such as wheelchair accessibility, 2 semi-private counseling booths and a private counseling office. I am able to donate to local charities such as a recent fundraiser the pharmacy created when the local historic gardens was looking for donations. We involved the community by selling \$1 tickets and the pharmacy matched all community donations dollar for dollar. We have been able to sponsor soccer teams, baseball teams, provide donations for local students studying abroad or local students competing for the winter Olympics. We have been able to sponsor golf tournaments for breast cancer, the local Kings Theatre and local wellness centers.

It is to this end that I have concerns with the proposed funding changes as these changes will force us to eliminate Pharmacist overlap, reduce the number of technicians on at a given time, and or even reduce our store hours. These proposed changes will have a negative effect on the patients we see and currently help every day. The proposed changes will force us to stop supporting things in our community, the things that make it a community.

Being part of a small town is what makes me enjoy my profession but being able to make a difference in my small town is why I am passionate about my profession. Although I understand the importance of Bill 17 and the ultimate end goal of this new act I ask that the passing of this bill be delayed until the negotiations of the terriff agreement be completed which will recognize and fairly compensate pharmacists for the services they provide.

In closing, I would like to read you a letter from one of our clients, Mr. White. (see attached) This story will give you a picture of what Hutchin's Pharmasave represents to the community.

Respectfully,

Krista McClair
Pharmacist, Owner
Hutchins Pharmasave