

## POSITION STATEMENT

### Pharmacy Depots

It is the position of the Council of the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists that the use of pharmacy “depots” (off-site premises used for the drop off and/or pick up of prescriptions) is an unacceptable method of distributing drug products in Nova Scotia.

The use of pharmacy depots is inconsistent with federal and provincial legislation. Such legislation requires that prescription and scheduled drugs be stored in a licensed facility, and under the control and supervision of a licensed pharmacist/certified dispenser. Personnel employed by a non-pharmacy depot site are not employees of the licensed pharmacy and therefore are not accountable to the pharmacist/pharmacy. Lines of accountability, with respect to drug distribution, are essential.

Depots may also contravene the College's Guidelines for Delivery of Prescriptions which, in part, state that:

- The patient's right to confidentiality is paramount. It is unreasonable to expect that the pharmacist can ensure patient confidentiality when prescriptions are dropped off for eventual pick up at a non-pharmacy depot site.
- Prescriptions should not be left in an alternate site for subsequent pick up by the patient unless the patient has expressly requested this favor, and the pharmacist should use professional judgement in approving the alternate site requested.
- Nondeliverable prescriptions should be returned to the pharmacy after the delivery attempt.
- Patient counseling, as set out in the Regulation of the Pharmacy Act, must be provided to the patient or the patient's agent.
- Narcotic and controlled drugs should be delivered directly to the patient or patient's agent.

This policy does not prohibit a pharmacist from delivering a prescription or a scheduled drug to a patient at a designated site at the patient's request, in exceptional circumstances. In such circumstances, the pharmacist is responsible for ensuring that:

- the requested delivery site is secure and private
- adequate steps have been taken to protect the confidentiality of any information respecting the patient
- adequate steps have been taken to ensure the correct identification of the patient
- the patient has been counseled concerning the drug