Statement on the Prescribing and Dispensing of Medications to Patients Outside of Canada

At their core, pharmacists are stewards for all medications. With a growing number of non-Canadian residents seeking medications from Canada, pharmacists have an important role to play in the availability of our drug resources.

The Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists (NSCP) has an obligation to ensure that pharmacy professionals practice in accordance with the law and in an ethical manner, so as not to jeopardize the supply of medications for Canadians.

For clarity, it is unethical for healthcare professionals to jeopardize the health of Canadians by exploiting for their financial advantage the price differential in medications that exists between Canada and the United States as a result of extensive public investment.

To that end, the NSCP has the following expectations of pharmacy professionals licensed in Nova Scotia:

- Pharmacists must not enter into arrangements to accommodate the business of exportation of medications outside of Canada. Such arrangements may be considered unethical and could amount to professional misconduct.

- Pharmacists must not countersign a prescription issued by another prescriber without direct patient contact.

- Pharmacists have the responsibility to comply with the laws of each province, state, and country to which they provide services/drugs.

When prescribing medications, pharmacists must:

- only prescribe medications to patients after they have conducted an appropriate patient assessment; and
- only prescribe medications within an established provider-patient relationship. In the absence of an established relationship with the patient, medications must not be prescribed for a patient solely on the basis of mailed or faxed information or an electronic questionnaire.

In addition to the above, pharmacists licensed in Nova Scotia are expected to adhere in full to the NSCP's _Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs_ and _Standards of Practice: Pharmacists Offering Pharmacy Services Via the Internet_.