



News Release

February 25, 2022

Nova Scotia Health partners with Sobeys and Lawtons Drugs on pharmacy walk-in clinic

New program supports timely access to primary care for Nova Scotians

NEW GLASGOW, NS: Sobeys and Lawtons Drugs, and Nova Scotia Health are partnering on an innovative collaborative care model that will provide Nova Scotians in the New Glasgow and Truro areas with another option for timely, routine, non-urgent health concerns. Known as Lawtons Drugs Pharmacist Walk-in Clinic+, pharmacists and a nurse practitioner will provide primary care at walk-in clinics above Sobeys owned Lawtons Drug pharmacies through this unique partnership.

“We are committed to improving access to high-quality care for Nova Scotians, and through this innovative partnership, we are able to explore ideas and solutions that have never been done before in our province,” said Karen Oldfield, Interim President and CEO, Nova Scotia Health. “This new model of care delivery will allow us to immediately improve access to primary care in these two communities; it’s one of many test and try opportunities we are moving forward with to improve our health system.”

This collaborative concept is based on a pharmacist-led walk-in clinic that opened last year above Lawtons Drugs in Pictou County. Through this new partnership, Nova Scotia Health is adding a nurse practitioner to the existing New Glasgow clinic, who will also provide care and health advice to patients at a newly established clinic in Truro.

“The pandemic has highlighted the need for primary healthcare support in rural communities,” said Vivek Sood, Executive Vice President, Related Businesses, Sobeys Inc. “We’ve tested the pharmacy walk-in clinic concept in New Glasgow and the community response has been very positive. The Nova Scotia Health partnership provides the added expertise of a nurse practitioner, and with a second clinic location now in Truro, we can continue to see and treat more people.”

Patients will be seen in a private consultation room by a pharmacist or nurse practitioner who can assess and treat a variety of illnesses and health conditions, and prescribe medications as needed.



Quick Facts

- Clinical settings, such as this collaborative walk-in clinic, put professional services first, and enable pharmacists to practice to their full scope with their unique health training.
- Pharmacists can assess, prescribe for, and treat a range of minor ailments and conditions including seasonal allergies, indigestion, minor joint pain, muscle sprains and skin conditions like eczema.
- Pharmacists are also able to renew prescriptions, prescribe birth control, cold sore medication, prescribe for uncomplicated UTIs and shingles, and they can manage chronic drug therapy for conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma.
- A nurse practitioner can diagnose and treat health issues such as asthma, COPD, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and other ongoing health conditions.
- A nurse practitioner can also prescribe medications, order, and interpret tests, including blood tests, X-rays, ultrasounds, and MRIs, and refer patients to a specialist or other health care provider, if needed.
- These pharmacist walk-in clinics offer virtual and in-person appointments for chronic illness management, regular prescriptions, and renewals.
- In a collaborative setting, pharmacists and nurse practitioners provide valuable expertise and accessible primary care for communities.
- Each clinic has the capacity to provide care for approximately two hundred people per week.
- More information about services, address and hours of operation, is available at lawtons.ca/pharmacistwalkinclinic .

Additional Quotes

“Innovative partnerships like this one are the key to making real change to the healthcare system and getting Nova Scotians the access to care they deserve. There is no question that we need to do things differently, and these clinics will increase access to care in rural communities. I look forward to seeing more of these in the future.”

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston



“The healthcare system needs more outside-the-box thinking and innovation to ensure Nova Scotians get the access to primary care they need. With more ideas like these the better off the healthcare system will be.”

Honourable Michelle Thompson, Minister of Health and Wellness

“We are pleased to launch this partnership with Sobeys and work toward improving access to primary care for individuals in the New Glasgow and Truro areas. Nurse practitioners provide valuable expertise and will work collaboratively with the pharmacists in these clinics while providing timely and appropriate access to high-quality care. This partnership is a prime example of the innovative solutions that are being implemented by Nova Scotia Health’s Innovation Hub. We look forward to learning from this proof-of-concept program and evaluating how this model could support other areas of the province.”

*Dr. Gail Tomblin Murphy, Vice President, Research, Innovation and Discovery,
and Chief Nurse Executive, Nova Scotia Health*

“The Lawtons Drugs Pharmacist Walk-in Clinic+ announced today is a great example of what partners in the healthcare system can accomplish when we work together and put patients at the centre of our decisions. This builds on the work that the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists has been doing to address regulatory barriers and support pharmacists in bringing the full extent of their knowledge and skills to the care of their patients. I am confident that today is just the first of many new and innovative ways of ensuring quality healthcare for Nova Scotians.”

Beverley Zwicker, CEO and Registrar, Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists

- 30 -

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