

July 31, 2019

The Honourable Adrian Dix, M.L.A.
Minister of Health
PO BOX 9050 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, British Columbia V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Dix,

Today the U.S. government announced the “Safe Importation Action Plan”, which would lay out potential steps to import Health Canada approved medications to lower the cost of these drugs for Americans. Through this plan, the U.S. federal government appears to be moving toward allowing the importation of Canadian drugs into their country for their residents’ use.

This has the potential to devastate the supplies of life-saving medications for British Columbians. British Columbia – along with the rest of Canada – can not manage the drug supply for both Canadians and American consumers.

The more than 4,000 community pharmacists of B.C., who work daily to secure medications for patients across the province, have been dealing with drug shortages for years and have seen a significant increase in drug shortages in the past 3 to 5 years.

In a survey done last year, the majority of British Columbians (71%) were concerned about drug shortages, and more than one-third (32%) had either personally experienced or knew someone who had experienced a drug shortage in the last three years.

Not surprisingly, Canadians over the age of 60 had concerns about drug shortages. Nearly two-thirds of Canadian seniors were prescribed five or more different drug classes.

British Columbia has an aging population that is growing; nearly one in four British Columbians will be older than 65 by 2031. And it’s expected that B.C.’s senior population will exceed the national average.

We are asking that as B.C.’s Minister of Health you urge the federal government and Health Canada to implement legislation or regulations to restrict U.S. importation of Canadian drugs.

We plan to issue a public statement asking that the B.C. government press the federal government to put in safeguards to protect the supply of medications for Canadians. We are hopeful we can count on your support and action.

Sincerely,



Chris Waller
President