

October 16, 2003

Larry Star  
Southeast Non-Insured Health Benefits  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor-511 Ellice Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1Y8

Dear Mr. Star,

I am writing with respect to the document titled "Notice To All Pharmacies" that has been circulated by Southeast Non-Insured Health Benefits. It is disappointing to see that Southeast Non-Insured Health Benefits has decided to proceed at this time, without first addressing the many concerns raised by the Manitoba Society of Pharmacists.

The current contract pharmacies are being asked to sign contains errors in contractual language, unreasonable contractual terms, and does not address the issue of certainty of payment. Pharmacies are not being asked to enter into a contract with the 7 first nation bands that are part of the Pilot Project, but rather a separate corporation which has only recently been created. This newly created corporation has no track record, no credit history, and no experience administering drug claims. Obviously pharmacies are going to be reluctant to enter into contracts given the inherent risk involved.

The Manitoba Society of Pharmacists has met with your organization on several occasions and has documented many of our concerns in our correspondence to you. We are now told by pharmacies that one of your representatives is telling pharmacy owners that the Manitoba Society of Pharmacists approves of the contract they are being asked to sign. This assertion is entirely wrong.

Our office has heard from several pharmacies that have been approached by the Southeast Non-Insured Health Benefits, none of whom have entered into an agreement. As has been pointed out in the past, unless you address the outstanding concerns, the Manitoba Society of Pharmacists has no choice but to recommend to members that they not sign your contract.

It is more efficient for you to deal directly with the Manitoba Society of Pharmacists, the organization that is charged with the mandate to represent pharmacists' interests in this area, than for you to try to mislead pharmacies into entering this unreasonable agreement. I suggest you are wasting valuable time by failing to deal with our concerns centrally.

Yours,

Scott Ransome, LL.B.  
Executive Director

cc MB Pharmacies