

March 11, 2016

Stéphane Lassignardie
AbbVie Canada
8401 Transcanadienne
Saint-Laurent, QC H4S 1Z1

Dear Mr. Lassignardie :

Action Hepatitis Canada (AHC) has been pleased to be supported by AbbVie over the last number of years. We are excited about the relationship that we have with you and are proud of the immense progress that your company has contributed to in the field of Hepatitis C (HCV). I believe that when it comes to HCV, we have the same goals in mind - we want people living with HCV to have access to the best care and treatment available. Ultimately, we will have succeeded when HCV is a thing of the past.

As you know, AHC is a coalition of over 40 member groups across Canada. Our mandate is advocacy. One of our main goals is to identify and eliminate obstacles preventing people living with HCV from getting the treatment that they need. Our federal government and most of our provincial and territorial governments have placed strict restrictions on access to the curative HCV drugs that have come to market since 2014. Our governments also seem reluctant to issue revised HCV screening guidelines calling for increased screening of people most unknowingly infected with HCV in Canada – those born between the years of 1945 and 1975. The reason for both the treatment restrictions and the lack of revised screening guidelines is pricing. Policy makers are reticent to make commitments in HCV in light of the cost per treatment and the cost per treatment in and of itself works against the goal of eliminating this virus from our midst.

We are writing to you today in the hopes of getting a clearer understanding of your perspective on these issues. We understand the importance of pharmaceutical companies making profits on their investments. We are thankful for the investment and progress that Abbvie has made in the HCV field but we are at a loss as to why such high prices would be sought for these drugs when so many more Canadians would have access to treatment (and a cure) if the prices were lower.

From our perspective, healthy profits would be made by either treating a small number of patients with a high price tag or a larger number of patients at more affordable price. For us and the people we engage, there is confusion about the pricing approach taken by Abbvie and other pharmaceutical companies, given your commitment to the health and well-being of Canadians.

I would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss the obstacles that you face when establishing appropriate pricing for medicines while ensuring best access possible. I believe that a better understanding on our front would facilitate our communicating messages to government officials and our membership more effectively.

We look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,



Patricia Bacon

Chair, Action Hepatitis Canada

***Action Hepatitis Canada** is a national coalition of organizations responding to hepatitis B and C. Our work engages government, policy makers, and civil society across Canada to promote hepatitis B and C **prevention**, improve access to care and **treatment**, increase knowledge and innovation, create public health **awareness**, build health-professional capacity, and **support** community-based groups and initiatives.*