

September 28, 2016

Douglas Clark
Executive Director
Patented Medicines Price Review Board (PMPRB)
333 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 1400
Ottawa, ON

Dear Mr. Clark,

I am writing to you today on behalf of Action Hepatitis Canada (AHC). The AHC is a national coalition of organizations responding to hepatitis B and C in Canada. We are concerned about the excessive costs for drugs that cure hepatitis C (HCV). We will be submitting a formal response to your current modernization consultation in the coming weeks.

Today, we want to express our concern that while the PMPRB examines its governing legislation and regulation, HCV drugs will continue to come to market at too-high prices. As you are aware, unreasonably high prices of DAAs thus far have led to a rationing of treatment for people living with HCV across Canada, keeping treatment out of reach to many.

When examining the pricing of HCV drugs since the arrival of Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs), it is clear that our drug pricing system is very flawed. It is apparent that pricing legislation did not foresee the discovery of medicines that would be such an improvement to former drugs and that would be needed to treat and cure hundreds of thousands of Canadians of a life threatening disease like hepatitis C. The arrival of DAAs has shone a light on particular weaknesses in our legislation that must be addressed.

New HCV medicines are coming to market in the coming months. The pricing for these new drugs will be examined using legislation that has been acknowledged as being faulty and in need of modernization. Based on the precedent of the PMPRB's review of pricing for other DAAs, we are worried that your organization will continue to allow similarly high pricing for HCV drugs that are coming to market in the coming months.

As we wait for a hopefully meaningful update and tightening of legislation, we encourage your office to be bold and creative in your work. We ask you to consider what you have learned so far in examining

your legislative framework and to use the release of upcoming HCV medicines to stop the trend of overpricing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Bacon', written in a cursive style.

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.*