



## **THE NORTH WEST COMPANY PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **THE NORTH WEST COMPANY ACQUIRES NORTHERN PHARMACY**

**Winnipeg, March 7, 2006:** Northern Pharmacy, servicing the western James Bay area, has been acquired by The North West Company (NWC). Previous owner and pharmacist, Dave Huston, has accepted the position as Director of the new Pharmacy division at NWC. Dave Mullins, Pharmacist Manager, will remain at Northern Pharmacy during the transition and roll out of the new NWC Health and Pharmacy initiative. Hospital telepharmacy programs at Weeneebayko General Hospital and Timmins and District Hospital, under the direction of Kevin McDonald and Kurt Schroeder respectively, will continue to provide the same high level of pharmaceutical care.

NWC recognizes the growing health needs of peoples living in remote northern locations and is committed to improving the health of their customers through the provision of accessible pharmacy goods and services. The creation of a new pharmacy initiative at NWC is expected to provide the necessary resources to enhance current pharmacy operations and programs. In addition, this transition will improve the competitiveness in recruiting pharmacists, implement consistencies in standard of practices, and invest in improved technologies allowing for improved point-of-care access in the coastal communities and remote hospitals. NWC has committed to a long-term pharmacy plan that will provide stability to existing operations and introduce a new and improved "Healthy Living" offering to our northern customers.

The commitment to developing skilled local pharmacy staff remains unchanged. It is expected that all current Northern Pharmacy employees will remain on staff. In addition, the on-site pharmacy technician courses (in association with Humber College distance education) are expected to improve with new emphasis placed on the Moosonee Pharmacy as an NWC training centre. Residents of the Mushkegowuk territory should enjoy an improved level of pharmacy services as these new NWC initiatives are implemented within the region. NWC and pharmacy management look forward to working with clients, hospitals, and other related health care workers in an effort to deliver the best possible pharmaceutical care to the area.

The North West Company Inc. is a leading retailer of food and everyday products and services to rural communities and urban neighborhoods across Canada and Alaska. NWC operates 193 stores under a number of trading names, including Northern,

NorthMart, Giant Tiger and AC Value Center, and provides catalogue shopping services through its *Selections* catalogue in northern Canada.

The units of the North West Company Fund trade on the TSX Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol "NWF.UN".

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