

Downtown store to remain open for prescriptions

Shoppers opens superstore

in city

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By Henry Bury
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Shoppers Drug Mart is boosting its presence in Belleville by opening its fourth Ontario "superstore" in the city's east end today.

And, owner Paul Hellier said he's just as happy to continue operating the downtown Shoppers store — albeit on a limited basis — as he is the new 16,000-square-foot concept store at 405 Dundas St. E. by Herchimer Avenue.

"I think it's important that I was able to keep the downtown store as it is the last remaining downtown pharmacy able to serve the needs of local residents," he said.

The Front Street store will now only be open Mondays to Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will concentrate on prescriptions and over-the-counter medications. He said other product lines will be subsequently reduced and made available at the superstore.

The 40-year-old Hellier is a licensed pharmacist and associate owner of both the new Shoppers superstore and the downtown location — the first two pharmacy operations he has owned in Ontario since emigrating here six years ago from Manchester, England.

The Kingston-area resident has owned and operated pharmacies in the United Kingdom and spent the past six years as senior district manager for an Ontario-wide pharmacy chain covering eastern and northern Ontario.

Hellier said he is proud to own and operate his first store in Belleville.

"I declined other such opportunities hoping for such a unique superstore concept and I'm extremely pleased to be given this opportunity but also to be able to stay in eastern Ontario," he said.

"I feel very comfortable with the people and the semi-rural setting."

"I believe Belleville offers an ideal opportunity for my type of business."

Hellier said his new superstore should satisfy all of the community's needs.

It will be open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to midnight, including holidays, and will employ 40 full and part-time staff.

"We have a state-of-the-art dispensary (pharmacy) that will allow us to offer many different services such as private patient counselling, in-store seminars and weekly medication compliance paks to reduce the likelihood of medication administration errors," he said.

The new concept store will also offer an extensive product range, such as milk, juice and other grocery items and a wide variety of health foods and vitamins, an in-