

Littleton pharmacy earns special accreditation

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LITTLETON – A local pharmacy, exclusively devoted to developing customized medications, has earned accreditation from the Pharmacy Compounding Accreditation Board.

"We're the first one in northern New England and the first one in New Hampshire to receive accreditation," said David Rochefort, who opened the Northern New England Compounding Pharmacy in 2006. "We're the second in New England" to receive it.

NNECP is the only pharmacy in the state that does compounding exclusively. In the days before pharmaceutical companies came into being, pharmacists customized medicines of the day to suit their customers' needs.

Although each state in the country has its own set of rules and requirements for compounding pharmacies, Rochefort said there is no uniform set of standards nationwide.

So three or four years ago, a half dozen or so national pharmacy groups got together to devise a standard for the compounding industry.

"We've got 50 states with 50 different sets of rules for compounding and these groups decided that, for the good of the people, patients and physicians, there needed to be some accountability."

About a year and a half ago, the accreditation process was finalized, he said.

"The Pharmacy Compounding Accreditation Board developed very stringent standards -- they are more stringent than those in New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine," he said.

In January 2007, Rochefort began the accreditation process, describing it as very thorough.

"The standards cover everything from how often the floors are cleaned to how employees are trained," he said.

Additionally, the compounds developed were sent to laboratories for testing, "to make sure that what we were making" contained the right compounds.

"Getting the results back gave us a very high degree of confidence and to get this national accreditation is very exciting."

NNECP, one of about 3,000 in the country received word of the accreditation about two weeks ago, he said.

Since opening two years ago, Rochefort said his business has doubled just within the past year and he needed to add extra staff to fill demand. Rochefort is a familiar name in the North Country. David Rochefort's father, Rich, owned

Sullivan Drug Store in Lancaster for years until it closed its doors in late 2005. Sullivan Drug, established in 1856, was the oldest drug store in New Hampshire until it closed.