



December 3, 2015

The Honourable Jane Philpott
Minister of Health
70 Colombine Driveway,
Tunney's Pasture
Postal Location: 0906C
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Philpott,

We welcome you to your new role as Canada's Minister of Health and we look forward to working together to defend and expand Canada's public health care system.

Your experience within our public health care system as well as advocating for some of our world's most vulnerable people speaks volumes about what you bring to this role. It is very clear that strong vision and leadership are required to ensure that all people in Canada have access to the public health care they need regardless of where they live or how much they earn.

As a national coalition, we have been working since the inception of public health care to ensure the preservation and improvement of Medicare. We are a public advocacy organization of national organizations representing seniors, faith groups, anti-poverty groups, women, nurses, health care workers, trade unions and students as well as affiliated coalitions in 9 provinces and 2 territories.

As a part of this year's National Medicare Week, public health care advocates from across the country are contacting their MPs to share their priorities and expectations for our health care system. We would also like to outline our priorities in hope that we will collaborate to maintain and improve our system from coast to coast to coast.

We are pleased that the Prime Minister has committed to renegotiate the **Health Accord** with the provinces and territories to provide a long-term funding agreement. As a coalition, we look forward to providing you with our input into this process to ensure that the new agreement meets the needs of all people in Canada. Additionally, we are pleased to learn that you have on a number of occasions joined our call for a **National Public Drug Plan**. You are no doubt aware that almost a quarter of people in our country have not taken necessary medications because they could not pay for them and that the implementation of this plan could save as much as \$11 billion annually. We are ready to work with you to create a National Drug Plan for all people in Canada.

As we look at the increasing health care needs of our aging population, it is clear that we are in desperate need of a plan. Our movement is calling for a **National Strategy for Seniors**

Care. This plan must include the appropriate continuum of publically-owned care providing hospital care, long-term care, homecare, as well as hospice and palliative care. Our aging population deserves nothing less.

Across this country our public health care system is under attack, whether it is increased user fees in Nova Scotia, the legislation of extra billing through Bill 20 in Quebec or the Dr. Day case in BC. There is a clear need to uphold single-tier Medicare as well as to stop user fees for medically necessary services and extra-billing of patients. Health care advocates are committed to working to protect our precious public health care system.

We invite you to join us in this important work.

Sincerely,

National

Canadian Health Coalition
Canadian Association of Retired Teachers
Canadian Federation of Nurses
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Union of Public Employees
Congress of Union Retirees of Canada
Council of Canadians
National Pensioners Federation
National Union of Public and General Employees
United Steelworkers

Provincial and Territorial

Alberta Friends of Medicare
Alternatives North
BC Health Coalition
Nova Scotia Health Coalition
Ontario Health Coalition
Hospital Employees' Union

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