

Open letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: The time for national leadership in health is now

Ottawa, February 1, 2017 – Canadians continue to look to their elected leaders to build a health care system able to meet evolving health care needs of our aging population. It's time for our federal government to step up and work with its provincial/territorial counterparts to ensure the best possible outcome for patients, families and the Canadian health care system as a whole.

Dear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,

A little over a year ago you stated clearly in your mandate letter to the Hon. Dr. Jane Philpott, Minister of Health for Canada that the top priority among a list of health care priorities was to “Engage provinces and territories in the development of a new multi-year Health Accord.” Since then, the top priority has slipped well down the list.

Canada's doctors know firsthand that our country needs a national vision for a Health Accord. We know that because each day, we see our patients and their families suffer due to the inadequacies of our system.

We felt it was important that these concerns came forward, so we joined parliamentarians in holding over 50 roundtables in ridings across the country. We also asked our Demand a Plan supporters to raise their concerns directly with you and your colleagues – and they responded by sending over 87,345 emails and letters to elected officials.

Each and every time, we reminded you and your colleagues that our population is aging and Canada needs a national Health Accord that focuses on seniors care.

We even created a roadmap to get there:

- A “demographic top-up” to help provinces and territories better meet seniors care needs;
- Coverage for high-cost medication to provide relief for Canadians facing expensive drug bills;
- More financial support for family caregivers by making tax credits refundable;
- A coordinated home care plan so that healthy seniors can continue to live in their homes and get the support they need
- Key infrastructure investments to improve and provide more long-term care for Canadians who need it;
- A national strategy for palliative and end-of-life care.

NEWS RELEASE | COMMUNIQUÉ

A national Health Accord is important to ensure families, patients – indeed all Canadians – have a strong health care system that can meet the needs of an aging population.

We haven't forgotten. Have you?

Sincerely,

The CMA and more than 50,000 DemandAPlan supporters

For 150 years, only the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) has united the broad expertise of the medical community for the benefit and well-being of all Canadians. The CMA currently represents over 85,000 physicians, comprises 12 provincial and territorial medical associations and is affiliated with over 60 national and international medical organizations.

-30-

To schedule an interview or for further information, please contact:

CMA Media Relations:

MediaInquiries@cma.ca

613-806-1865