

June 24, 2021

Honourable Chrystia Freeland, PC, MP  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Freeland:

On behalf of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), allow me to extend my sincere gratitude for including additional investments to the Canada Health Transfer within bill C-30, the Budget Implementation Act, 2021. On behalf of the 80,000 physicians, residents and medical learners who belong to the CMA, we are pleased to see the one-time payment of \$4 billion to the provinces and territories to begin addressing the backlogs plaguing Canada's healthcare system and \$1 billion to assist with Canada's COVID-19 immunization plan. This is an important first step in rebuilding Canada's healthcare system and it brings us a great deal of relief to witness bill C-30 passing with these measures included.

The \$4 billion funding commitment will help address longer term effects of the pandemic, including being able to perform long-delayed diagnostic interventions and to deliver delayed preventative care. In 2020, in response to the first wave of the pandemic, CMA commissioned [a Deloitte report](#) that led to a better understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic caused backlogs within our healthcare system and the funding required in order to address them. These findings fueled CMA's recommendations that were outlined in numerous submissions to the federal government and in our testimonies at Parliamentary committees.

Our efforts emphasized that this new funding should be directed at addressing the backlog of surgeries caused by the pandemic. However, much more funding is required, particularly to bolster Canada's public health capacity and to expand the delivery of primary care. This funding is necessary if we are to address the invisible, undiagnosed healthcare issues affecting Canadians who were unable to receive ongoing medical attention due to the pandemic.

Canada requires a sustainable model for equitable access to care, including a team-based model that is rooted in the networking of family physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers and other health care professionals. As the cost of healthcare continues to rise in Canada, it is important to implement a sustainable model that will bolster our healthcare system as it recovers from the pandemic and for the generations to come. As always, CMA would be pleased to assist the government in implementing this model and help address issues within our healthcare system.

Allow me to express my gratitude once again for including the CMA's recommendation to provide a \$4 billion payment to the provinces and territories through the Canada Health Transfer in bill C-30. The CMA is looking forward to collaborating with the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to address the initial backlog caused by the pandemic and identify any future opportunities where we can work together to ensure the sustainability of our healthcare system.



Yours sincerely,

E. Ann Collins, BSc, MD  
President, Canadian Medical Association

cc. Honorable Dominic LeBlanc, PC, MP, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs  
Honorable Patty Hajdu, PC, MP, Minister of Health