



November 9, 2021

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

**Re: Canada's doctors and nurses urgently calling for federal measures to address Canada's health workforce crisis**

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

On behalf of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), we are writing in follow up to our meeting request submitted on October 12, 2021 to respectfully urge the federal government to prioritize the implementation of its many commitments to support Canada's health workforce. There is a growing urgency for federal leadership and action as the health workforce crisis progresses unabated across the country.

On behalf of CMA's membership of 80,000 physicians and medical learners and Canada's 448,000 regulated nurses, we strongly support the laudable and substantial commitments during the election campaign, specifically:

- Improving access to primary care by investing \$3.2 billion for 7,500 new family doctors, nurses, and nurse practitioners
- Eliminating health system waitlists by investing \$6 billion
- Expanding the number of family doctors and primary health teams in rural communities by increasing debt relief for family doctors, residents in family medicine, nurse practitioners and nurses
- Investing \$9 billion to enhance long-term care in Canada, including hiring 50,000 personal support workers and developing national standards
- Increasing the availability of mental health services for Canadians through the new Canada Mental Health Transfer, which is urgently needed by people in Canada, including health workers
- Protecting health workers with new legislation to establish safe zones at health facilities and making it a criminal offence to intimidate or threaten health care workers

The CMA and CNA are eager to collaborate with the Government of Canada to support and enable the rapid implementation of these commitments. We pledge the resources of our organizations to work with the federal government to advance these priorities.

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In addition to implementing these critical commitments, new measures and actions by the federal government are urgently needed to address Canada's health workforce crisis. Across all jurisdictions, on a weekly and daily basis, troubling developments continue to emerge, emphasizing the stark state of Canada's health workforce. Just this past week, despite the risks to health care workers and patients, provinces have cited staffing shortages as the rationale for walking back COVID-19 vaccine mandates in health settings.

Without health care workers, there is simply no health care. Canada's health care systems face the greatest threat of its history. The CMA and CNA are exploring additional solutions to address the health workforce crisis and ensure people in Canada have the access to the care they need and deserve. We look forward to collaborating in advancing the commitments outlined above and other necessary actions to address this crisis.

Sincerely,



Katharine Smart, MD, FRCP  
President, Canadian Medical Association



Tim Guest, MBA, B.Sc.N., RN  
President, Canadian Nurses Association

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Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, PC, MP, Minister of Health  
Hon. Carolyn Bennett, PC, MP, Associate Minister of Health  
Janice Charette, Interim Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to Cabinet  
Stephen Lucas, Deputy Minister of Health