February 22, 2022

Honorable Chrystia Freeland, PC, MP
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
Finance Canada
chrystia.freeland@fin.gc.ca

Re: Canadian Medical Association, Federal policy options to advance pan-Canadian licensure

Dear Deputy Prime Minister Freeland:

On behalf of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Budget 2022 roundtable on February 4, 2022. As we enter the third year of the pandemic, Budget 2022 is a pivotal opportunity for strategic federal investment to rebuild and reform health care in Canada.

The impacts of the pandemic on Canada’s health workforce have been significant. Preliminary findings from the CMA’s National Physician Wellness Survey reveal that physician burnout is at an all time high with more than half of physicians reporting high levels of burnout – nearly double pre-pandemic levels. And nearly half told us they are likely or very likely to reduce clinical hours in the next 24 months.

In this context, the CMA recommends urgent federal investments in three priority areas to support the foundations of health care in Canada:

- Federal leadership for integrated pan-Canadian health workforce planning
- Increasing patient access to family doctors and primary care teams
- Optimizing access to medical professionals by enabling the adoption of pan-Canadian medical licensure

In follow up to your request for more information on how the federal government may contribute to reducing mobility barriers of healthcare workers and support the establishment of pan-Canadian licensure, the attached brief summarizes the following five policy options for federal action:

- Funding a Federal Health Care Regulator for all populations under federal responsibility
- Funding a pan-Canadian Digital Registry of health professionals
- Funding to enable interjurisdictional virtual care for all Canadians
- Funding and undertaking a Parliamentary review of the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA)
- Funding a pilot project to promote interprovincial license recognition

Detailed information about these recommendations and how the federal government can take leadership can be found in the attached brief.

.../2
Deputy Prime Minister Freeland  
February 22, 2022  
Page 2

On behalf of the CMA, I would gladly meet with you to discuss in detail these policy options as well as how the CMA may collaborate in the advancement of these priority federal health investments.

Yours sincerely,

Katharine Smart, MD, FRCPC  
President  
Canadian Medical Association

c.c.: Minister of Health, Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, PC, MP  
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, PC, MP

Attachment, *Federal Policy Options to Advance Pan-Canadian Licensure: Improving health care by reducing interprovincial barriers*