



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CLOSURE OF HEALTH COUNCIL ERODES FEDERAL LEADERSHIP ROLE IN HEALTH**

OTTAWA, April 18, 2013 – The Health Action Lobby (HEAL) is very concerned by the federal government’s recent decision to withdraw funding for the Health Council of Canada.

“This decision is a signal to Canadians that the future of health and health care is not a priority. Nothing could be further from the truth. Public opinion polls consistently rank the future of health care in Canada as one of the most important public policy priorities,” said Mr. Glenn Brimacombe, HEAL Co-Chair. “What message is the federal government sending to Canadians about its commitment and role when it comes to health?”

The Health Council was originally created to monitor progress related to the 2003/2004 Health Accords. The role of the Council evolved to bring together representatives of the provinces and territories, the federal government and the public to share perspectives, lessons learned and leading practices to accelerate the pace of health innovation across Canada, improve access to quality health services, and monitor overall health system performance.

“The federal government’s leadership role when it comes to health is twofold – leading by example in its areas of authority and facilitating collaboration among the provinces and territories”, said Dr. Karen Cohen HEAL Co-Chair. “HEAL has long supported the key role of the federal government when it comes to the health of Canadians. Dismantling the Health Council of Canada does not enhance pan-Canadian collaboration.”

HEAL urges the federal government to reconsider its decision.

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*HEAL is a coalition of 40 national health and consumer associations and organizations dedicated to protecting and strengthening Canada's health system. It represents more than half a million providers and consumers of health care. HEAL was formed in 1991 out of concern over the erosion of the federal government's role in supporting a national health care system. For more information, please visit our web-site at [www.healthactionlobby.ca](http://www.healthactionlobby.ca).*

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## **HEAL Members**

Alzheimer Society of Canada  
Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations  
Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada  
Canadian AIDS Society  
Canadian Association of Community Health Centres  
Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists  
Canadian Association of Midwives  
Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists  
Canadian Association of Optometrists  
Canadian Association of Physician Assistants  
Canadian Association of Radiologists  
Canadian Association of Social Workers  
Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists & Audiologists  
Canadian Chiropractic Association  
Canadian College of Health Leaders  
Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association  
Canadian Dental Association  
Canadian Dental Hygienists Association  
Canadian Dermatology Association  
Canadian Healthcare Association  
Canadian Home Care Association  
Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association  
Canadian Medical Association  
Canadian Mental Health Association  
Canadian Nurses Association  
Canadian Orthopaedic Association  
Canadian Pharmacists Association  
Canadian Physiotherapy Association  
Canadian Podiatric Medical Association  
Canadian Psychological Association  
Canadian Psychiatric Association  
Canadian Public Health Association  
Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science  
Canadian Society of Nutrition Management  
Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists  
Catholic Health Alliance of Canada  
College of Family Physicians of Canada  
Dietitians of Canada  
Paramedic Association of Canada  
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada