

Media Release
For Immediate Release

What's Next for Health Care?

National health leaders call on premiers to make multi-year commitment to health-care transformation

Niagara-on-the-Lake, July 24, 2013 — The national organizations representing the majority of Canada's health-care providers — the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and the Health Action Lobby (HEAL) — applaud the pan-Canadian collaborative approach of the health-care innovation working group (HCIWG). Continued progress will require a multi-year commitment from providers and governments together.

Leaders from the three provider groups met with premiers Brad Wall and Robert Ghiz in Niagara-on-the-Lake this week during the Council of the Federation's summer meetings. On the agenda is a report on the completion of the second phase of the HCIWG. Providers are there to affirm the continued need for this important pan-Canadian collaboration to address the quality, safety and sustainability of Canada's health system.

"In forming the health-care innovation working group, Canada's premiers recognized that collaboration and continuity are essential to build on best practices and ensure Canadians have the best health and health care in the world," said CMA president Dr. Anna Reid. "The public needs to hear how the next phase of work will improve health outcomes for Canadians. Canada's health-care providers are committed to working with the premiers on issues such as developing a strategy to better meet the evolving needs of our nation's seniors."

CNA, CMA and HEAL are all involved with the HCIWG, formed by the Council of the Federation in January 2012 and co-chaired by Saskatchewan's Premier Brad Wall and Prince Edward Island's Premier Robert Ghiz. The HCIWG is tasked with identifying and increasing the acceptance of shared health system initiatives.

"The innovation of this working group accelerates the change we are driving in health practice: interprofessional collaboration," said CNA president Dr. Barb Mildon. "The key to effecting real change in the health-care system is collaboration at all levels and across different sectors: care providers working both with one another to deliver the best care in a timely, safe manner and with governments to scale up local innovations into national solutions."

Progress has been made since last summer's release of the group's initial report, *From Innovation to Action*. The provider groups are working with decision-makers to develop a clear vision for the HCIWG and to ensure that the momentum and commitment by premiers continues.

"The working group's progress to date is positive, but as health providers we're pushing for more," said HEAL co-chair Dr. Karen Cohen. "It's critical that the provinces and territories continue to support collaboration between the working group and health providers. It is also important that they support the delivery of collaborative health care on the ground. The expertise and perspectives of frontline health providers are critical for making real change happen."

CNA is the national professional voice of registered nurses in Canada. A federation of 11 provincial and territorial nursing associations and colleges representing nearly 150,000 registered nurses, CNA advances the practice and profession of nursing to improve health outcomes and strengthen Canada's publicly funded, not-for-profit health system.

CMA is the national voice of Canadian physicians. Founded in 1867, the CMA is a voluntary professional organization representing more than 78,000 of Canada's physicians and comprising 12 provincial and territorial medical associations and 51 national medical organizations. CMA's mission is to serve and unite the physicians of Canada and be the national advocate, in partnership with the people of Canada, for the highest standards of health and health care.

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.

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For more information, please contact:

Kate Headley, External Communications Coordinator
Canadian Nurses Association
Telephone: 613-237-2159, ext. 561
Cell: 613-697-7507
E-mail: kheadley@cna-aiic.ca



Lucie Boileau, Senior Advisor, Communications and Public Outreach
Canadian Medical Association
Telephone: 613-731-8610 | 800-663-7336 ext. 1266
Cell: 613-447-0866
E-mail: Lucie.Boileau@cma.ca

Dr. Karen Cohen, Co-Chair, HEAL
CEO, Canadian Psychological Association
Telephone: 613-237-2144 ext. 344
Cell: 613-799-0532
E-mail: kcohen@cpa.ca