FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Federal Investments in Health System are Welcome

OTTAWA, March 5, 2010 – The Health Action Lobby (HEAL) acknowledges the federal government’s continued commitment to investing in Canada’s health system through the Canada Health Transfer, which will increase by 6% for each of the next four years.

Furthermore, “the commitment by the federal government to release $500 million for Canada Health Infoway as announced in Budget 2009 can have a powerful and transformative impact on the health system by accelerating the introduction of new information technologies that will improve the delivery of efficient and cost-effective health services”, said Dr. Karen Cohen, Co-Chair of HEAL, and Executive Director of the Canadian Psychological Association.

HEAL underscores the importance of the federal government’s commitment to funding health research and the policies and programs that support health promotion and prevention for Canadians, including: $285 million for aboriginal health programs in five key areas, and $199 million over two years to ensure that the necessary mental health and emotional support services continue to be provided to former students of Indian Residential Schools and their families, and that payments to former students are made in a timely and effective manner.

“Understanding current fiscal realities facing the federal, provincial and territorial governments, HEAL welcomes the federal government’s continued support of health care – which remains the most important social policy issue on the minds of Canadians but is concerned that this is not sufficient to bring about necessary health system transformation in light of the increasing health needs of an aging demographic and people with chronic illness”, said Mr. Glenn Brimacombe, Co-Chair of HEAL, and President & CEO of the Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations.

As we approach the end of the 2004 First Ministers’ Accord, members of HEAL look forward to continuing to work with the federal government, and the provinces and territories, to design and implement policies and programs that best meet the changing health and health care needs of Canadians.

For more information:

Mr. Glenn Brimacombe, Co-Chair, HEAL
(President & CEO, ACAHO)
Telephone: (613) 730-5818, Extension 323
Cell Phone: (613) 866-3613
Fax: (613) 730-4314
E-mail: brimacombe@acaho.org

Dr. Karen Cohen, Co-Chair, HEAL
(Executive Director, Canadian Psychological Association)
Telephone: (613) 237-2144, Extension 344
Cell Phone: (613) 799-0532
Fax: (613) 237-1674
E-mail: kcohen@cpa.ca
Alzheimer Society of Canada
Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations
Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada
Canadian AIDS Society
Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists
Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Canadian Association of Optometrists
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