

December 22, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the Extended Healthcare Professionals Coalition (EHPC) – a coalition of 11 national professional health and social organizations – I want to acknowledge and commend your efforts to secure access for Canadians to COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada. The addition of safe, effective vaccines to our suite of tools to combat COVID-19 marks a major scientific achievement and provides much-needed encouragement to the healthcare providers managing the pandemic in communities across Canada.

The EHPC is reassured by the federal government's progress to procure and expedite delivery of vaccines that have the approval of Health Canada and appreciates the collaboration between levels of government to ensure the rollout and distribution of the vaccine happens quickly and effectively. The EHPC agrees with the recommendations of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) that priority access to the vaccine must be based on those at highest risk of severe illness or death due to COVID-19, those at greatest exposure risk due to maintaining the COVID-19 response, those contributing to the essential functioning of society and those at heightened risk of exposure due to living or working conditions.

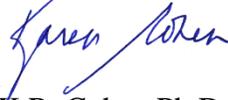
As regulated health care providers who work in all across public and private sector – primary care, acute care, long-term care, home care and community-based settings – our members bring care to Canadians in their homes and communities. When our care is provided outside of Canada's publicly funded institutions, its coverage by extended health benefits plans reduces reliance on the publicly funded system for access to health care Canadians need. The need for many of these health care professionals to be in close, in-person contact with patients increases the exposure risk they face. To provide our members with the best means of protecting themselves and patients during the delivery of this care, the EHPC is encouraging governments to make the approved COVID-19 vaccines available to health care workers delivering care in all settings as early as possible in the vaccine roll-out. This will help ensure Canadians can continue to safely access the services they need to maintain their health so they can in turn support themselves, their families and the communities of which they are a part.

Again, we appreciate and value the tremendous efforts you have undertaken to secure access to and distribution of this critical measure in our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic. EHPC members would be happy to consult with you on this matter further and welcome the opportunity to collaborate as you work across governments and organizations on the distribution and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines in Canada. Please direct any responses to EHPC Chair Ondina Love (olove@cdha.ca) or vice-Chair Karen Cohen (kCohen@cpa.ca).

Sincerely,



Ondina Love, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
The Canadian Dental Hygienists
Association



K.R. Cohen Ph.D., C. Psych.
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Psychological Association



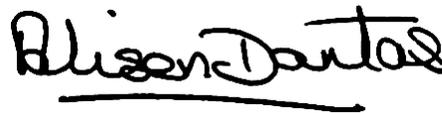
Hélène Sabourin
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Association of Occupational
Therapists



François Couillard
Chief Executive Officer/Chef de la direction
Canadian Association of Optometrists



Fred Phelps
Executive Director
Canadian Association of Social Workers



Alison Dantas, MA, CEC, C. Dir.
CEO, CCA
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Joelle Walker
Vice President, Public Affairs
Canadian Pharmacists Association



JP Cody-Cox
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Physiotherapy Association



Nathalie Savoie, MBA, RD/Dt.P.
Chief Executive Officer
Dietitians of Canada



Dawn Wilson, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
Speech-Language & Audiology Canada



CC. The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health

About the Extended Healthcare Professionals Coalition (EHPC)

EHPC aims to improve the health and welfare of all Canadians; promote excellence and innovation in health research and practice and promote the advancement, development, dissemination and application of knowledge that advances health, social services and well-being for Canadians.

Our membership includes:

- Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
- Canadian Association of Optometrists
- Canadian Association of Social Workers
- Canadian Chiropractic Association
- Canadian Dental Hygienists Association
- Canadian Pharmacists Association
- Canadian Physiotherapy Association
- Canadian Psychological Association
- Dietitians of Canada
- Speech-Language & Audiology Canada