



CANADIAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

SOCIÉTÉ
CANADIENNE
DE PSYCHOLOGIE

The Honourable Lena Diab, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6
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RE: Reconsideration of changes to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)

Dear Minister Diab,

As the national association representing the science, practice, and education of psychology in Canada – whose membership includes registered psychologists across Canada – the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) wishes to express serious concern regarding the changes to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) announced by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada on January 27, 2026.

The introduction of a 30% co-payment on supplemental services – including psychological assessment and treatment – effective May 1, 2026, will create significant barriers to access for refugees and asylum seekers. As you are likely aware, the prevalence of mental health conditions such as trauma and depression is 3 to 10 times higher in this vulnerable population than the general public, and many of them are arriving in Canada with little-to-no financial or other resources. While a 30% co-payment may appear reasonable to many Canadians, it will likely put these services out of reach for children, youth, and families fleeing significant hardships, functioning as a de facto denial of care and contradicting the federal government's broader commitment to universal access.

As we continue to advocate for parity for mental health services for all Canadians, we take this opportunity to reiterate that timely, accessible, and appropriate psychological care is essential to avoid the acute system pressures caused by untreated mental health concerns. The evidence is clear that delayed or forgone care leads to worsening health outcomes, increased use of emergency services, and higher downstream system costs.

The CPA urges the Government of Canada to reverse the introduction of these co-payments, and to work with provider and stakeholder groups to ensure that the IFHP remains accessible, effective, and aligned with Canada's commitments to health equity.

I can be reached at executiveoffice@cpa.ca, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lisa Votta-Bleeker
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Psychological Association

CC: The Honourable Marjorie Michel, P.C., M.P., Minister of Health

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