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CPA to ask federal government to eliminate tax on psychological services in Budget 2016

Ottawa, ON (February 18, 2016) - The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) will ask the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance to eliminate the sales tax on all psychological services in the new budget when it appears as a witness for the pre-budget consultations tomorrow morning. CPA is one of 90 organizations who have been invited to appear before the committee at meetings held this week in Ottawa.

The 2013 Federal Budget included an unclear statement about changes to the GST/HST to amend what is and what is not considered a health service. Because of this change psychologists and other health care professionals must charge their patients GST/ HST for some services.

Psychological services are not currently covered by provincial and territorial health insurance plans, and are paid out-of-pocket by taxpayers or through private insurance. This means that Canadians already face significant financial barriers to accessing needed mental health care. Imposing this tax on psychological services makes these barriers even greater and only earns the government \$1-2 million per year.

“This tax policy runs counter the government’s agenda to advance mental health in Canada,” says Dr. Karen R. Cohen, Chief Executive Office, CPA. “All psychological services have a health purpose and should remain exempt from sales tax.”

Last year, CPA’s members sent over 3,000 letters to their MPs on this issue. CPA believes the new government has an opportunity to rectify this situation in Budget 2016. Removing the sales tax on psychological services would send the signal that the government is committed to reducing barriers to needed mental health care.

CPA will also recommend the government make access to psychological services a priority of the new health accord; target funding to assist the provinces and territories to improve access to psychological services; provide continued, increased, and balanced funding for research via base funding for the granting councils and stabilized funding for operating and infrastructure support; and provide funding for Statistics Canada to re-instate some key surveys.

For further details, please see [CPA’s pre-budget submission](#).

About the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA)

The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) is the national association for the science, practice and education of psychology in Canada. With over 7,000 members and affiliates, CPA is Canada's largest association for psychology. To learn more, visit www.cpa.ca.

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