



November 10, 2015

VIA E-MAIL pm@pm.gc.ca (hard copy to follow)

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Office of the Prime Minister
Langevin Building
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

As you prepare for the return of Parliament and a throne speech that will outline your new government's agenda, I would like to offer some thoughts on behalf of our members, which include 135,000 nurses from 11 provincial and territorial nursing associations and colleges across Canada.

Your leadership is vital to achieving the goals you set during the recent election campaign, including the establishment of a new relationship with provincial and territorial governments, the creation of a new Health Accord and action on climate change. These timely and welcome initiatives are among the key priorities the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) sees as vital for achieving better health outcomes and a stronger publicly funded, not-for-profit health system.

We were also pleased to see your party's decision to launch a national public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, an issue we specifically raised during the campaign, and to hear of the new indigenous and northern affairs minister's intention to conduct the inquiry in an appropriate manner. In a related area of concern, CNA would like to offer the government any assistance it needs to address the unique health disparities for Canada's indigenous populations.

CNA believes the government could effectively build on these goals by adopting a wider perspective when it creates and implements policies that can affect the well-being of Canadians.

We therefore see the December 4th throne speech as an opportunity for the government to show its intention to take action on health through a Health in All Policies approach that reflects the principles of primary health care. The specific type of care nurses provide enables them to understand the various factors that can affect a person's health — including employment, income, education, housing, the physical environment and more. Indeed, by considering the health consequences of all public policies, laws and programs — whether developed for environment, transport, employment, immigration or other departments — the government would be able to improve the health and well-being of Canadians as it promotes economic growth, productivity and prosperity.

To be most effective, the federal government would take the lead in integrating this approach for all of its policies, legislation and programs before they are introduced. Yet, as outlined in CNA's *Health in All Policies National Action Plan* (enclosed), the strategy would also involve the input of key stakeholders such as provincial and territorial governments, health-care groups and organizations, and the Canadian public. The results would of course benefit all Canadians.

In the coming weeks, we intend to meet with Minister of Health Jane Philpott to find effective and innovative ways of revitalizing primary health care, improving equitable access to health services and enhancing interprofessional collaboration. As for working toward a *cost-effective* publicly funded, not-for-profit health system, we believe the federal government can play an essential role while ensuring that health-care services are delivered to all Canadians.

If you or your staff have any questions about these issues, please contact David Granovsky, CNA's manager of government relations. David can be reached at 613-237-2159, ext. 525, or dgranovsky@cna-aiic.ca. We look forward to working with you in the 42nd Parliament and wish you the very best in your efforts to advance the health of Canadians in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karima Velji". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the bottom of the name.

Karima Velji, RN, PhD, CHE
President

cc: Hon. Jane Philpott, Minister of Health