



February 16, 2023

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
OTTAWA ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

Canada's Premiers met on February 13, 2023 to discuss the proposals outlined at the February 7, 2023 First Ministers' working meeting on Health Care. Considering the urgent needs in our health care systems, provinces and territories are accepting the federal funding and will all be moving forward with necessary negotiations to conclude our respective bilateral agreements.

No issue is more important to Canadians than quality, accessible health services for themselves and their loved ones. After almost two and a half years, we are disappointed with the limited new federal funding. While this first step marks a positive development, the federal approach will clearly not address structural health care funding needs, nor long-term sustainability challenges we face in our health care systems across the country.

To achieve our shared goals, further constructive discussions are required to plan for the longer-term predictability and stability that Canadians expect in their health care systems. We propose further detailed discussions among FPT Deputy Ministers of Intergovernmental Affairs in the coming weeks. Suggested focus areas include:

- Providing enhanced financial resources and longer-term fiscal certainty for territories, recognizing their unique circumstances;
- Addressing the "fiscal cliff" caused by uncertainty over the scheduled expiry of bilateral health funding agreements, both for:
  - Previously committed funding for Home and Community Care, Mental Health and Substance Use, and Long-term Care services;
  - The new contemplated 10 year agreements on shared priority areas;
- The future path and adequacy of the Canada Health Transfer and the escalator.

To address these, we ask the federal government to establish a formal FPT review process for expiring bilateral health funding agreements by January 2025, to secure service continuity and funding predictability for programming. We also ask to establish a broader FPT review of the federal health care funding plan, consisting of an assessment of both the new tailored bilateral agreements and the Canada Health Transfer investments announced on February 7, 2023.

We also look forward to continued discussions on related priorities, such as ensuring expedited federal immigration pathways and processing are in place for internationally-educated health professionals.

Bilateral negotiations will now unfold in each province and territory. Any new health care delivery data sharing measures will ensure the protection of personal health information and reflect the capacities and needs in each of our jurisdictions.

We look forward to necessary ongoing dialogue to support the future of health care services across the country – an issue that will always be a fundamental priority for all Canadians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Heather Stefanson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Heather Stefanson  
Chair, Council of the Federation  
Premier of Manitoba

cc: Premiers

Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities