

September 2, 2021

Open Letter to Federal Party Leaders

This federal election, HealthCareCAN, the national voice of hospitals, research institutes and healthcare organization, has outlined five election imperatives that address the most pressing issues healthcare organizations across the country are grappling with as Canada continues its pandemic response and moves towards recovery.

The [five imperatives](#) are:

1. Strengthen Canadian health research and innovation through consistent, long-term investment.
2. Implement a national health workforce planning strategy to address workforce shortages and better support the mental health and wellbeing of healthcare workers.
3. Reimagine older adult care and support better aging through improved home, community and long-term care.
4. Modernize health infrastructure as part of Canada's approach to improving healthcare, supporting virtual care and increased cybersecurity, and tackling climate change.
5. Build a more inclusive, equitable and resilient health system, with a focus on improving mental health services, Indigenous health services, and equity and representation within the system.

Following a review of each party's platform, HealthCareCAN and our members are eager to learn more about each party leader's approach to strengthening and sustaining Canada's health research and innovation sector and addressing Canada's health workforce shortage. Below are two fundamental questions to which we are seeking a response, ideally by September 9, 2021.

- Throughout the pandemic, Canadians have seen the power of health research and innovation, and the important role it plays in keeping people healthy, communities thriving, and the economy strong. Canada lags our peers in health research investments as a percentage of GDP and as a percentage of public spending on healthcare. Many of our global counterparts, like the U.S. and the U.K., are investing tens of billions of dollars to bolster their health research and innovation sectors and ensure they are ready for the next pandemic. What will your party do to strengthen and sustain Canada's health research sector moving forward, and how will the sector factor into your plan for Canada's economic recovery?
- National healthcare advocacy groups and health system experts, including HealthCareCAN, have identified the need for a health workforce planning strategy to both deal with the workforce shortages facing our country and better support the mental health and wellbeing of healthcare workers. Does your party support the implementation of a national health workforce planning strategy and how would your party work with provinces, territories, regulators, and other stakeholders to implement such a strategy?

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my request. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Paul-Émile Cloutier
President and CEO