



MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Nurses Association responds to Liberal health plan

September 30, 2015, Ottawa — The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) thanks the Liberal Party of Canada for releasing a plan for health care earlier today, which included proposed investments in the expansion of home care. As health is unequivocally an issue that affects every Canadian, it is encouraging to see it in the headlines during the current federal election campaign.

CNA and Canada's registered nurses appreciate the Liberal Party of Canada's focus on our country's universal health-care system and the emphasis in their plan on Canadians' access to "timely, publicly-funded, quality, universal health care — regardless of their background, physical need, where they live, or how much they make." Although the documentation shared today is scarce on implementation details, it is a positive start.

Two elements of the plan are particularly important:

1. **A federal government commitment "to innovation, collaboration, and partnering with provinces and territories."** CNA has always been and will continue to be a vocal advocate for more collaboration on health among all levels of government. Provinces and territories need flexibility to use the best approach for their distinct populations. The federal government must work to unite Canada's health-care system across the regions so that *all* Canadians are guaranteed the same access to safe, high-quality health care. The government can also foster better care by identifying local innovations that can be scaled up into national solutions.

CNA would like to see greater accountability in each party's health plan through health and system improvement goals. These goals should be based on priority quality indicators, such as reduced obesity and diabetes rates, with targets across the health-care system.

2. **Making the shift "from physician- and hospital-based care to an integrated, primary-care system that incorporates community, home and long-term care"**

The health-care system we have was designed for a population from previous decades. Today, Canadians are living longer than ever before — with more chronic diseases and more complicated health-care requirements. Chronic diseases are now costing our economy about \$190 billion annually while consuming 67 per cent of all direct health-care costs. Under these circumstances, hospitals are no longer the most effective or efficient way of responding. If instead we realign our economic and human resources between acute care and community-based care, we could (1) alleviate this burden from hospitals while enabling them to focus more on critical and complex care needs, and (2) offer better health promotion and disease prevention with improved access to primary health care for Canadians.

CNA is especially focused on home care for seniors during this election. StatsCan announced this week that Canadian seniors now outnumber children. CNA wants the next federal government to establish common home care standards across the country, provide more support to family caregivers and enhance community- and home-based care.

Visit cna-aiic.ca/election2015 for more information about our federal election campaign call.

CNA is the national professional voice representing 135,000 registered nurses in Canada. CNA advances the practice and profession of nursing to improve health outcomes and strengthen Canada's publicly funded, not-for-profit health system.

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