



Aug. 19, 2025

The Honourable Marjorie Michel
Minister of Health
Email: hcminister.ministresc@hc-sc.gc.ca

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the 55,000 members of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO), we write to express to you our deep concern with your government's lack of commitment to national pharmacare.

During the federal election campaign, the Liberal Party of Canada made a clear and explicit pledge to protect pharmacare. Specifically, you stated in [your platform](#): *"we are committed to making sure that Canadians can get the medications they need, no matter where they live or ability to pay."* Canadians voted believing that a Liberal government would safeguard and expand access to essential medicines. We expect you to honour that commitment.

Your [recent statement](#) that "It's a new government, and we are in a new context" is deeply troubling. It was precisely in response to today's context that your election platform was crafted. Nurses have fought for decades to establish a universal, comprehensive pharmacare program, ensuring that all Canadians have equal access to the medications they need. We will not quietly stand by now to see election promises broken and progress on pharmacare halted.

Just two weeks ago, RNAO submitted [a proposal](#) to the Standing Committee on Finance to designate the completion of medicare – including pharmacare – as a national project. We did so for the same reasons that led the previous government to pass the Pharmacare Act, and for the same reasons your party promised to uphold it: because it matters to Canadians, and because, [in the words of your election platform](#), *"It's time to return to the foundational values upon which our national health care was developed: free of charge, fair, universal, and accessible."*

The evidence for a national pharmacare plan is overwhelming. [Successive studies](#) by the Parliamentary Budget Office since 2017 have shown that pharmacare will save Canadians money. The [2019 Final Report of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare](#) demonstrated annual savings of \$5 billion within five years of implementation.

The advisory council's report also documented the urgent need:

- 20 per cent of Canadians must pay out of pocket for prescription drugs,
- Nearly 1 million Canadians cut household spending on food or heat to afford medication, and
- One in five households reported a family member who did not take prescribed medication due to cost in the previous year.

These realities persist. Prescription non-compliance continues to drive unnecessary demand on the health system – estimated by the advisory council to include 220,000 additional emergency department visits and 90,000 hospitalizations annually.

As nurses, we see first-hand the human and systemic consequences when people cannot afford their medications. With more than 1,500 [Best Practice Spotlight Organizations](#)® worldwide, RNAO's views are also informed by international evidence and expertise.

We urge you to hold true to your campaign commitment and advance the promise of universal, publicly funded pharmacare in Canada. We would be happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss pharmacare specifically and, more broadly, how RNAO can assist the government meet the challenges ahead.

Yours respectfully,



Dr. Doris Grinspun RN, BScN, MSN, PhD,
LLD(hon), Dr(hc) DHC DHC, FAAN, FCAN, O.ONT
RNAO CEO



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RNAO President

Copy to:

The Right Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada
Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Ontario Minister of Health