



Via e-mail: Minister_Ministre@hc-sc.gc.ca

April 19, 2013

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health - Health Canada
Brooke Claxton Building, 16th Floor
70 Columbine Driveway
Tunney's Pasture, Mail Stop: 0916C
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Aglukkaq:

On behalf of more than 148,000 Canadian registered nurses, I am writing to convey my extreme disappointment regarding your government's decision to cancel federal funding for the Health Council of Canada (HCC). I urge you to reconsider this decision in light of the inevitable adverse consequences it will have on the health of the nation and the performance of our health-care system.

Dismantling this national, federal resource, especially at a time when the need to transform health-care is greater than ever, will reduce overall accountability to levels nurses and Canadians cannot accept. The HCC has effectively monitored and reported on key targets set out in the 2004 Health Accord. This monitoring ensured the health-care system's responsiveness to population health needs and provided a valuable tool for measuring the effectiveness of provincial and territorial health-care investments.

Apart from essential monitoring, the HCC reported progress on health care directly to Canadians, helping to move the yardstick on health literacy in a positive direction. Federal support to the HCC is needed to ensure quality improvements are assessed and to keep the public informed on decisions about individual and population health. Indeed, realizing the level of health empowerment needed to optimize the health-care system directly depends on our ability to inform and engage Canadians.

The results and momentum built from the last federal-provincial/territorial agreement on health, and the ensuing work of the HCC, show the need to accelerate health-care transformation through another meaningful intergovernmental health-care agreement. Rather than abandoning these mechanisms, they should be renewed by moving beyond the basic fiscal formula. The withdrawal of the federal government from setting and monitoring national standards on health-care and health is shortsighted.

At this crucial time in Canada's history, CNA urges the government to enhance commitments that support the health of Canadians. The federal government must commit to and demonstrate leadership if we are to achieve the healthiest Canada possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Mildon".

Barbara Mildon, RN, PhD, CHE, CCHN(C)
President