

July 28, 2026

The Honourable Marjorie Michel, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health
Health Canada
70 Colombine Driveway
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

The Honourable Evan Solomon
Minister of Artificial Intelligence and
Digital Innovation
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Re: An Urgent Call to Amend and Pass the *Connected Care for Canadians Act*

On behalf of the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), the national professional voice of nurses and nurse practitioners in Canada, we are writing to express our support for the passage of Bill S-5, the *Connected Care for Canadians Act* and to urge the Government of Canada to adopt targeted amendments that will strengthen its impact for patients, providers, and health systems. Bill S-5 represents a vital opportunity to eliminate fragmented health data and records across Canada and improve timely access to care and critical patient information. However, the full potential of the bill can only be realized by aligning direct workforce optimization, privacy controls, and regulatory safeguards as part of its operationalization.

Nurses are the largest group of regulated health professionals and among the primary users of health information systems. Embedding key structural supports to optimize the nursing workforce is vital to unlocking the full vision of Bill S-5. Right now, outdated structures, regulatory and legislative barriers, and underutilization of nurse practitioners, prescribing authority by qualified nurses, and nurse-led models of care continue to impede timely access and coordinated care delivery. Achieving true connected care for Canadians requires a recognition of the essential pairing of improved workforce strength and interoperability.

Mandating appropriate governance, accountability, and privacy regulations to protect vulnerable Canadians is an important next step. As patients gain greater access to their health information, safeguards and opportunities for ongoing literacy programming must be put in place to balance patient autonomy and informed decision-making with protection for individuals who may be vulnerable to coercion, abuse, or unauthorized access to their personal health information.

Bill S-5 must also be considered within the context of Canada's broader artificial intelligence (AI) agenda. By prohibiting data blocking, the bill creates opportunities for innovation and more efficient health information exchange. Nonetheless, as these technologies evolve, it will be important to ensure proper controls and safeguards are in place to address risks related to privacy, data quality, and potential bias, while maintaining public trust in the use of health data. Nurses, who have continually ranked among the most trusted of all professions, will be

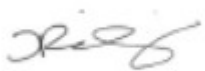
essential in engaging patients and communities around the safe and responsible uptake of AI health technologies.

CNA appreciates your leadership in advancing this important legislation and urges the Government to strengthen and pass Bill S-5 by:

- **Prioritizing workforce optimization as central to connected care.** Bill S-5 should be used as an opportunity for federal-provincial-territorial collaboration to identify and address legislative, regulatory, and operational barriers that limit the full utilization of all four designations of nurses including nurse practitioners, prescribing authority for other designations of nurses, and team-based models of care.
- **Embedding robust privacy, accountability, and oversight requirements.** The Act should establish clear mechanisms to govern the collection, sharing, secondary use, and disclosure of health information, ensuring transparency regarding how health data is accessed and shared.
- **Strengthening safeguards for data integrity and advanced analytics through nursing data standards:** Nurses must have a formal role in the development, integration and ongoing governance of interoperability frameworks, including the adoption of national nursing data standards. Nursing leadership is essential to provide the human oversight necessary to ensure data integrity and protect patient safety and prevent flawed, inaccurate system-generated records that could bias patient outcomes.
- **Requiring public reporting on outcomes and impacts.** The Act should require regular public reporting on how interoperability initiatives affect patient access, care coordination, and outcomes.

The decisions made now will shape how Canadian health information is accessed, shared, governed, and protected for decades to come. CNA urges the Government of Canada to seize this opportunity to pass Bill S-5 with the necessary amendments required to build an integrated, trusted, patient-centred health system. We welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations further.

Sincerely,



Dr. Tracie Risling
President, Canadian Nurses Association



Dr. Valerie Grdisa
CEO, Canadian Nurses Association