



For immediate release

Support for principles to guide transformation of the health care system gathers steam as patient groups sign on

Ottawa, Jan. 13, 2012 - The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) today announced that 14 patient advocacy groups are raising their voices in support of a set of common principles developed by Canada's physicians and nurses to guide the transformation of the health care system to make it centred on the needs of patients.

The principles were developed by the CMA and the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) (www.cma.ca/advocacy/hctprinciples) to guide health care transformation in Canada. In addition to the patient groups, the principles have been endorsed by over 60 health and medical organizations.

"The goal is for provincial/territorial decision-makers and their federal counterparts to use these principles as they plan how they intend to work together to modernize health care for Canadians," said Dr. John Haggie, President of the CMA.

The provincial and territorial premiers are holding a Council of the Federation meeting in Victoria January 16 and 17 on the subject of health care.

"As premiers have indicated, building a sustainable, accountable, publicly funded health care system that provides patient-centred care requires a principles-based approach," added Dr. Haggie. "What we are proposing is just such an approach."

Attached are quotes from representatives of the patient advocacy groups that have endorsed the CMA/CNA principles.

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) is the national voice of Canadian physicians. Founded in 1867, CMA's mission is to serve and unite the physicians of Canada and be the national advocate, in partnership with the people of Canada, for the highest standards of health and health care. The CMA is a voluntary professional organization representing over 74,000 of Canada's physicians and comprising 12 provincial and territorial medical associations and 51 national medical organizations.

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Quotes from patient advocacy groups

“I strongly urge the Provincial Health Ministers, amid all their conflicting pressures, to stop and remember that their ministries should meet the needs of patients in their constituencies. They should take a very close look at the principles put forward by the CMA/CNA, and endorsed by patients, as a way to make the health care system more patient-centred.”

- Gail Attara, President and CEO of the Gastrointestinal Society and Chair of the Best Medicines Coalition

For additional information contact: 1-866-600-4875

“The Canadian Home Care Association is pleased to support the CMA/CNA Principles to Guide Health Care Transformation, as they outline a direction for the creation of a high quality, person-centred health care system that is integrated, accessible, and responsive to the needs of Canadians.”

- Nadine Henningsen, Executive Director, Canadian Home Care Association

For additional information contact: 905-361-3277

“The Alzheimer Society stands behind the Canadian Medical Association and Canadian Nurses Association in their proposal to extend the principles of the Canada Health Act beyond hospitals and doctors’ offices. These same principles are fundamental to our national dementia strategy. A sustainable integrated system that bridges primary, community and home care is essential to meet the growing needs of our aging population.”

- Naguib Gouda, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Canada

For additional information contact: 1-800-879-4226, ext. 8920

“The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada strongly endorses the CMA-CNA principles as essential ingredients to be taken into account if our governments are to transform our healthcare system in today’s reality. Any meaningful transformation must ensure a true focus on patient centered care and it is essential that all Canadians have equal and timely access to effective treatment to improve patient outcomes.”

- Barry Stein, President, Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada

For additional information contact: 877-50-COLON (26566) ext. 230

“The Canadian Breast Cancer Network is pleased to support the CMA-CNA joint principles. We believe a health system that is person-centred, integrated, equitable, and accountable is necessary to ensure adequate care to Canadians affected by breast cancer and to help inform best health care policy decisions.”

- Diana Ermel, Past-President, Canadian Breast Cancer Network

For additional information contact: 613-230-3044 or 800-685-8820

“As the voice for Canadian families impacted by kidney cancer, we support the principles of accountability and national standards of care for all patients, regardless of their province or postal code.”

- Deb Maskens, Chair, Kidney Cancer Canada

For additional information contact: 905-476-1935

“The Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) supports the CMA-CNA Principles For Health Care Transformation because MDSC has been an advocate for many years for a patient/consumer focused health care system and the CMA-CNA Principles are consistent with our advocacy position.”

- Phil Upshall, National Executive Director, Mood Disorders Society of Canada

For additional information contact: 519-824-5535 or 705-471-6101

“The Canadian Skin Patient Alliance (CSPA) supports the Principles for Healthcare Transformation drafted by the CMA and CNA. We hope that federal and provincial governments will look to these principles as they work with stakeholders, including patients, to draft a new Health Accord which truly meets the needs of Canadian patients and the families that support them. Canadians look to their governments to ensure their health needs are met, efficiently and effectively, and the millions of skin patients across the country support the need for improvement in our current health system. The CSPA lauds the CMA and CNA for this initiative and is proud to endorse the Principles.”

- Christine Janus, Executive Director, Canadian Skin Patient Alliance

For additional information contact: 613-422-4265

“The Canadian Arthritis Patients Alliance represents 4.5 million Canadians with arthritis who use our health care system. We believe that the principles proposed by the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association, of putting patients first, will translate into better health outcomes for people with arthritis and all Canadians.”

- Louise Bergeron, Interim President, Canadian Arthritis Patients Alliance

For additional information contact: 514-425-6532

“As Canada's only patient-driven Chronic Disease Self-Management program, the Institute for Optimizing Health Outcomes welcomes the joint CMA-CNA principles for transforming healthcare with an emphasis on patient-centred quality care. We applaud their initiative to bring together stakeholders to help ensure these principles become the reality for health services in Canada.”

- Durhane Wong-Rieger, President & CEO, Institute for Optimizing Health Outcomes

For additional information contact: 416-969-7435

“On behalf of the 3.2 million Canadians with a rare disorder, the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders, we are pleased that the joint CMA-CNA principles for transforming health care call for patient-centred, quality, and equitable healthcare. We also believe that a focus on health promotion and prevention, where possible, will assure sustainability and value for healthcare investment.”

- Durhane Wong-Rieger, President, Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders

For additional information contact: 647-801-5176

“The Brain Injury Association of Canada (BIAC) endorses the Guiding Principles with the inclusion of injury prevention as being a major contributor to improving population health. BIAC has seen inequalities in how brain injured survivors are treated across Canada and would welcome an equitable and enhanced patient experience for all Canadians who are living and suffering with the invisible and/or visible disabilities associated with a brain injury.”

- Harry Zarins, Executive Director, Brain Injury Association of Canada

For additional information contact: 613-762-1222

“ACCÉSSS views the guiding principles for the transformation of Canada's health care system, as drafted by the CMA and the CNA, as added value to the social and economic development of Canada and the provinces and the harmonious inclusion of new arrivals. The demographic changes brought about by increased immigration require a new way of developing and managing the health and social services network. An inclusive health and social services network must be based on organized services that meet the needs of this population.”

- Jérôme Di Giovanni, Executive Director, ACCÉSSS

For additional information contact: 514-287-1106