

September 7, 2018

Dear members,

Together, we have advocated long and hard for national pharmacare, with employers, with governments, and with our community and social partners. **We have unanimously passed recommendations at our Canadian and Regional Councils, and we clearly understand the multiple benefits.** These efforts are showing results; the drive to have universal prescription drug coverage has kicked up a notch.

Now, the federal government is actively seeking input from Canadians about what a national pharmacare plan can look like for our country. Join this important conversation – [participate in this online survey today.](#)

### **Why should I participate?**

As workers, and as Canadians, it is imperative your voice is heard during this public engagement. The call for a national pharmacare program in Canada is not only rooted in the well-established economic benefits of implementing such a program, but it is also based on the principle that all Canadians should have equitable access to medically necessary prescription drugs without financial or other barriers.

Here is why we need pharmacare:

#### A healthier population

Canada is currently the only developed country with a universal health care system that has no universal prescription drug coverage. Building a stronger health care system for all Canadians to have access to the medication that they need is an important step towards ensuring a healthier population.

#### Inconsistent coverage

Prescription drug coverage for Canadians is inconsistent at best, and nonexistent for too many. Pharmacare must adhere to the principles of the Canada Health Act and be part of our single-payer system. Simply filling in the gaps won't work. It will not be transferable, and certainly won't have the benefits of bulk purchasing power.

#### Cost-savings

Studies consistently show a national drug plan through bulk purchasing could lower the costs of drugs enough to finance a full pharmacare system with no increase to government costs, and in

fact a net savings of \$11 billion a year for federal, provincial and territorial governments, the private sector and individual Canadians.

**Pharmacare, like our public health care system, does not need to have demeaning means testing, nor should it have prohibitive co-pays. In fact, these would simply add to administration costs. In addition, of course the cost-savings of a healthier population are immeasurable.**

#### **How can I participate?**

We suggest reading the attached backgrounder on pharmacare for an overview of the issue. To participate, you can:

- [Join this online discussion forum](#)
- [Send in written submissions](#), or
- [Complete this online questionnaire](#)

The deadline to participate is September 28, 2018.

#### **The time to act is now.**

We need public national pharmacare program that is universal, affordable and inclusive. We know that Canada needs pharmacare for a healthier population, for comprehensive coverage and for savings. Now tell the federal government the same, at:

<https://www.letstalkhealth.ca/pharmacare>

In solidarity,



**Jerry Dias**  
**National President**

lhcope343