**Association canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités**



**Canadian Association of Retired Teachers**

HEALTH SERVICES AND INSURANCE COMMITTEE

Report to ACER-CART

AGM 2017

**Terms of Reference**

The Health Services and Insurance Committee shall:

1. provide the Members with information and advice regarding health and insurance plans;
2. study the healthcare and insurance plans of the Members; and
3. prepare for the Executive proposals and position papers related to health and insurance plans with appropriate recommendations.

**Report**

Following the 2016 AGM, and in light of negotiations that were being undertaken concerning the renewal of the Canada Health Accord, the Health and Insurance Committee focused on its first project, a letter-writing campaign. It invited ACER-CART Members to become proactive with respect to negotiations for the renewal of this Accord. To encourage participation, the Committee prepared three sample letters, one each addressed to the Prime Minister, to the Minister of Health, and to a Member of Parliament. These letters expressed support for an Accord that was to be renegotiated in collaboration with provincial counterparts. The letters further requested that the federal government provide for the transfer of funds to a sufficient level that reflected current healthcare needs of our aging population. One of these samples, that to the Prime Minister, is appended hereto.

In November 2016, these sample letters, along with their French versions, were sent to ACER-CART Members with a covering letter explaining the context, and the mechanics of a letter-sending campaign. Members were encouraged to enjoin their memberships to adapt these letters and even to address equivalent letters to provincial ministers and MLAs on an individual basis. The objective of this campaign was to give notice to our elected representatives that we were truly concerned about protecting and improving public healthcare delivery across Canada.

The Health and Insurance Committee did not have the means to incorporate a feedback mechanism to obtain information from Members as to whether they had participated, and to what degree, and whether any responses were received from the politicians contacted. This would probably have been valuable data for future use.

As a second project, the Health Services and Insurance Committee was asked to review the committee’s terms of reference. This review was undertaken in light of the committee’s current practices, and taking in consideration the Priorities, and the Strategic Plan that were approved at the 2016 AGM. As required by our Bylaws and Articles, suggested changes were forwarded to the Legislative Committee and will be submitted under separate cover to the AGM for deliberation and decision.

Submitted by:

Ed Zegray, Chair

Regional Representative-East

Committee members:

Tom Gaskell, NS

JoAnn Lauber, BC

**Appendix**

October 31, 2016

The Right Honorable Justin Trudeau, P.C., B. A., B.Ed.

Prime Minister of Canada

House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

The federal government has always been an active partner whenever major developments in the history of health care in Canada have occurred. I am very optimistic because health care remains a top concern for your government.

Today’s health needs, however, are different from those of the first Accord. We now need to focus on such things as mental health services, pharmacare, and seniors care -- including home care and long-term care -- among other health services.

Canadians strongly support major healthcare reforms. As you are aware, Prime Minister, Canadians are getting older and will require a lot more support from their Medicare. I believe the health care system must do more for seniors and their families. As such, I urge that an emphasis on seniors care be targeted in the next Health Accord. I truly believe that, as the prime architect of change, your role of Prime Minister is critical to getting the job done.

I applaud the federal collaboration with the provinces and territories – including the commitment to renegotiate a new reinforced and strengthened Health Accord – to ensure the delivery of the best care to Canadians. In particular, it is my hope that the transfer of funds should incorporate a formula of topping off to compensate the provinces with older populations to deal with the pressures placed on them by an aging population.

I also endorse the 2015 Vancouver Roundtable in their call for action and I support the principles of the Declaration Concerning a National Health Care Strategy for Seniors. To name a few, it calls for the federal government to:

- Provide a thoughtfully structured national health care strategy for aging Canadians.

- Develop and implement a national pharmacare strategy that includes purchasing medically necessary prescriptions.

- Establish national standards for home care and a strategy that will provide publicly-funded in-home care by paid, qualified professionals and also offer unpaid caregivers more support.

Prime Minister, notwithstanding criticism from Donald Trump, our national health care system is a defining and envious characteristic of Canada. Canadians across this country are looking to you and the Liberal government to take focussed action to protect Medicare and to initiate immediate steps to create the Medicare of the future. You have the opportunity to leave behind a legacy and to be known as The Liberal Prime Minister whose government was able to perpetuate and enhance the Canadian ideal that is Medicare. I therefore urge you to collaborate with the provincial, territorial and local governments in the renegotiation of a national health accord that meets the changing needs of our aging population; and that protects, transforms and strengthens the delivery system of health care to all Canadians, in particular to older Canadians.

Yours sincerely,

John Emanon

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