**Political Advocacy Committee Report**

**March 23, 2018**

**National Pharmacare Program**

I provided the following documents on the issue to Executive members:

* National Pharmacare Program (September 2017) published in RTO Winter Newsletter pages 16-17
* Council of Canadians On-Line Petition Advocating a National Pharmacare Program (December 2017)
* Reduction on costs of generic drugs effective April 1, 2018 (January 2018)
* Canadian Labour Congress – Pharmacare: A Plan For Everyone

Message to M.P.’s (February 2018)

As a follow up I will be attending the Canadian Labour Congress town hall meeting on a National Pharmacare Program in Halifax on the evening of March 27, 2018.

We have all heard recent comments from Finance Minister Morneau which undermines Dr. Eric Hoskins Advisory Council before the council commences looking at international models and makes recommendations for a Canadian plan. I believe Minister Morneau has once again placed himself in a conflict of interest, similar to Bill C-27, with his former company Morneau Sheppell.

I believe we need to send a strong message similar to the Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Federation of Nurses and the Canadian Doctors for Medicare to Prime Minister Trudeau that ACER-CART firmly advocates for a national, single universal pharmacare program with a one Canadian purchaser national pharmaceutical formulary.

I also believe it is important to speak to our provincial Ministers of Health and relay the same message. I have spoken to Nova Scotia’s Minister of Health and Wellness and Minister of Seniors and they agree with our definition of a National Pharmacare Program and are willing to bring this to the attention of Dr. Hoskins Advisory Council.

**Elder Abuse**

I believe you have received the document I produced on the issue and I understand it will be re-formatted into a pamphlet and be provided to members at the June 1 – 2, 2018 AGM. I continue to collect additional information and will provide updates from time to time.

**Ministry For Seniors**

I sent a copy of the Alberta resolution which will be debated at the Liberal Party of Canada’s National Convention in Halifax from April 18-22, 2018. You will recall that one of the four recommendations in the ACER-CART pamphlet **A Vision For Canada** was a National Seniors Care Plan. In the pamphlet we urged a newly elected federal government to collaborate with the provinces and territories to facilitate the establishment of a national seniors care plan which would co-ordinate care for seniors. This would involve a universal system of home care, home support, long-term care services and hospice and palliative care.

**Federal Budget 2018**

One of the items not highlighted in the recent federal budget was the $75 million provided to New Brunswick over the next fiscal year to support a Healthy Seniors Pilot Project. This project will help governments better understand the gendered impacts of an aging population, improve the quality of life for senior citizens and help lay the ground work for a dissemination of best practices in supporting healthy aging for all Canadians. Stay tuned.

**Empowering Communities, Reducing Harm: 2018 National Stakeholder Summit on Medication Safety For Older Men and Women**

The Deputy Minister of Seniors and I were asked to represent the Nova Scotia government at the Deprescribing Fair coordinated by the University of Montreal Research Centre On Geriatrics. Over 100 participants from all provinces and territories were provided information on up-to-date research on the dangers of over prescribing medications. The fair provided information on raising awareness and the attempt to reduce prescriptions for seniors by 50% in 2020. There were also sessions on the promotion of seniors health and ensuring access to safer drugs and non-drug therapies. Most of the discussion was around the over use of sleeping pills and opiods for non-cancer patients. I look forward to more information which will be provided by the Canadian Deprescribing Network at the professional development session prior to the ACER-CART AGM on the afternoon of May 31, 2018.

Bill Berryman

Chair, Political Advocacy Commitltee