



-for immediate release-

Coalition of 40 national health organizations release consensus statement on ongoing COVID-19 impacts on the front lines.

HEAL membership has collaborated to create a robust document aimed at the federal government with recommendations for a healthier nation.

(OTTAWA – November 17, 2020) Today, the Organizations for Health Action (HEAL) released 'Beyond COVID-19: HEAL's recommendations for a healthier nation', a document outlining issues HEAL's membership has seen on the front lines during the pandemic.

As a coalition of 40 national health organizations, HEAL membership has aligned on recommendations from the front lines to the federal government, through COVID-19 and beyond. This document also offers a look at priorities with a COVID-19 lens, with HEAL also staying committed to its two main priority areas; Seniors Care and Mental Health.

"We have a unique opportunity and responsibility to implement longer-term operational changes to our healthcare systems, learning from the impacts of this pandemic," said HEAL Co-Chair, François Couillard.

HEAL's members include those representing regulated health care providers working within the public sector, those working in communities and in the private sector, as well as organizations that deliver health care services to Canadians. The recommendations outlined in this document focus on the need to mitigate further impacts of future COVID waves, particularly on Canadian seniors, but also mitigate the lasting impacts on mental health and the substance use of Canadians, including ongoing lack of access to care.

"The Government of Canada has put in place measures intended to support the safety and security of all Canadians, including professionals working to serve those made vulnerable by the crisis," said HEAL Co-Chair, H  l  ne Sabourin. "But more must be done to support and protect Canadians as we continue through this time of grave uncertainty."

In March, HEAL formed a COVID-19 Task Force to optimize collaboration with the government and disseminate accurate messaging within the sector and to the public. It surveyed its members at the outset of the crisis and identified a series of key issues. A second survey was completed in advance of the release of the 'Beyond COVID-19' document, which found that the three key areas members are concerned with on a daily basis include access to proper resources including space and information, exposure to the virus and access to PPE , and the mental health of health providers.

“The issues we faced in March are still very much relevant today with this second wave, as outlined in our survey results and ‘Beyond COVID-19’ document. We look forward to our continued work with Minister Hajdu’s and Dr. Tam’s respective teams moving forward,” said Couillard.

“We must listen to the healthcare professionals on the front lines, and take these recommendations into account. We must learn from this, and ensure we are prepared for what comes next,” concluded Sabourin.

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HEAL, Organizations for Health Action, is a coalition of 40 national health organizations dedicated to improving the health of Canadians and the quality of care they receive. Our members are professional associations of regulated health care providers and organizations of health charities that provide a range of health care services across Canada. HEAL now represents more than 650,000 providers (and consumers) of health care.

For more information and to access Beyond COVID-19 and survey results, visit <https://healthaction.ca/>

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