



**Newfoundland and Labrador  
Public Sector Pensioners' Association**

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March 23, 2022

Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos  
Minister of Health  
Government of Canada  
[hcmminister.ministresc@canada.ca](mailto:hcmminister.ministresc@canada.ca)

**Re: National Universal Pharmacare**

Dear Minister Duclos,

The Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors and Pensioners Coalition is composed of twelve member associations whose collective purpose is, through a unified voice, to advocate on matters that challenge the well-being and quality of life of seniors, pensioners, and retirees in Newfoundland and Labrador, in particular, and to actively participate in, support, and advocate for new and improved actions that will enhance the quality of life for seniors, pensioners and retirees across Canada. We have provincial membership outreach to approximately 100,000 throughout our membership communities and an additional 150,000 due to familial and friendship connections.

The purpose of this communication is to press for long-awaited actions to implement a National Universal Pharmacare Program. We have advocated for this implementation for many years through our MPs, directly to various ministers and jointly with other national groups. We fully understand the need for research, science, and budgetary considerations, but this is a program that Canadians have demanded for years, have been promised for years, and are getting very frustrated with the long wait. Health outcomes are not improving, which could be mitigated through a universal medication plan. No person in Canada should have to choose between food, heat, medication, and ultimately their health, when a program can be put in place that eliminates that need for such choosing.

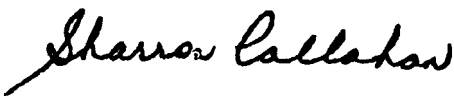
As Minister of Health, you have seen firsthand the impact on the health of Canadians in the past two years and you have been party to multiple

discussions and advocacy actions to bring about the national universal pharmacare plan. There is no doubt about the positive impacts that such a program would have on the overall betterment of the health of all Canadians.

The recently announced Liberal-NDP Supply and Confidence Agreement was an initial signal of hope that National Universal Pharmacare might happen sooner than later. The statement in the Agreement, however, gives a different timeline, one that is long and extended further into the future to the end of this Parliament's term to 2025: "Continuing progress towards a universal national pharmacare program by passing a Canada Pharmacare Act by the end of 2023 and then tasking the National Drug Agency to develop a national formulary of essential medicines and bulk purchasing plan by the end of the agreement". This speaks to legislation and it talks about a formulary of medicines, which respectfully, Minister, has been in the mandate of former Health Ministers for a couple of terms already.

In conclusion, Canadians simply expect the courage and commitment of our political leaders to make this a priority, to stop with the rhetoric, and to make national universal pharmacare a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sharron Callahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sharron" and last name "Callahan" clearly distinguishable.

Sharron Callahan  
Chair, NL Seniors & Pensioners Coalition  
Executive Director, NLPSA

cc. Minister Kamal Khera, Minister of Seniors  
[kamal.khera@parl.gc.ca](mailto:kamal.khera@parl.gc.ca)

cc. NL Liberal Caucus  
cc. PC MP Clifford Small  
cc. Minister Dr. John Haggie