

MEMORANDUM

To: Aimee Sulliman
From: Peter Cleary
Date: June 20, 2018
Subject: Government of Canada launches Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare

Overview

Today, Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor and Dr. Eric Hoskins announced the members of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare as well as the consultation process the council will undertake over the coming months. The government also released its discussion paper to guide the consultations taking place throughout the summer.

Specifically, Dr. Hoskins noted his responsibility includes addressing the lack of comprehensive drug coverage throughout Canada, identifying how that gap is currently addressed where it exists, what the system needs to look like to address such a gap and how it should be implemented.

The Minister indicated she expects the report to be made public in the spring of 2019. However, we understand that the government expects an internal interim report by the end of the year for potential consideration in the 2019 Federal Budget.

The government did not announce any measures they would consider implementing to address any immediate needs or concerns identified by patients, advocates or the media. During the announcement, it was also insisted that the federal government has no preferred policy at this time.

The council members that will work with Dr. Hoskins include:

- **Ms. Mia Homsy**, Council Vice Chair, and Director General of the Institut du Québec;
- **Dr. Nadine Caron**, Canada's first female Indigenous surgeon from the University of British Columbia;
- **Mr. Vincent Dumez**, Co-director of the Centre of Excellence on Partnership with Patients and the Public (CEPPP) at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Montreal, and a patient with significant lived experience;
- **Ms. Camille Orridge**, Senior Fellow at the Wellesley Institute focussed on health equity, and former CEO of the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network;

- **Ms. Diana Whalen**, former Deputy Premier and Finance Minister of Nova Scotia, and laureate of Women of Distinction Award by the Cornwallis Progress Club for her work in the community;
- **Mr. John Wright**, former Deputy Minister of Health and Deputy Minister of Finance for the Government of Saskatchewan, and former President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Discussion Paper and Consultation

The council has a [landing page](#), where stakeholders and Canadians can complete a survey (that closes September 30th, 2018) as well as information in order to provide a submission.

The advisory council is considering hosting roundtables in the following cities, and are currently developing a list of stakeholders that may be invited to participate:

- Vancouver/Victoria, B.C.;
- Edmonton, AB;
- Regina, SK;
- Winnipeg, MB;
- Toronto, ON;
- National Capital Region;
- Montreal/Quebec City, QC;
- Fredericton, NB;
- Charlottetown, PEI;
- Halifax, NS;
- and St John's, NL.

The government also released a discussion paper, that can be found [here](#).

Key Highlights from the Discussion Paper include:

- The question of affordability is addressed in some manner, noting that any solution needs to be affordable to Canadians – which they identify as employers and government. The paper frames a pharmacare plan as a necessary solution to save governments and Canadians money through a more coordinated system.
- The Council will conduct a fiscal, economic and social assessment of domestic and international models relating to pharmacare.
- The Council will provide recommendations through the principle of equity, a similar theme to that provided by Dr. Martin and Dr. Forest in their recent report on the Pan-Canadian Health Organizations.
- The overview of pharmacare and the current structures in Canada are similar to the overview provided in the Standing Committee on Health's Pharmacare report, such as: identifying the status-quo as a patchwork of private and public plans, those with plans may also face affordability issues with deductibles, co-payments and annual

maximums and that neither the public or private plans are sustainable in the long-term.

- Changes to PMPRB, through regulations, and work completed through the pCPA are highlighted as key accomplishments by government to reduce the cost of drugs and strengthen the drug review, implementation and marketing systems.

The paper is broken down into a series of sections:

- 1) **Who will get covered and how:** The paper provides three visions - comprehensive universal coverage, a safety net or closing the gaps.
- 2) **What drugs get covered:** The three options presented include an essential medicines list, most frequent prescribed drugs or a more comprehensive approach based on more generous formularies.
- 3) **Who pays:** The paper identifies that the current mix of existing payment schemes could change (pharmacy costs, premiums and/or taxes) and also considers other mechanisms that could include a flat fee or percentage of the cost of each prescription.

While the paper is short and does not provide much direction, it consistently establishes three visions for recommendations: limited intervention through closing the gaps, greater structural change to improve coverage or a broad, national comprehensive approach.

Next Steps

- With the framing established by the government and advisory council, consideration should be given if Neighbourhood Pharmacy is to make a submission to the advisory council, what its position may be and how Neighbourhood Pharmacy can contribute to the sectors broader work on pharmacare and continue to push the agenda of pharmacy. Of concern, the discussion paper when discussing affordability does not include industry as a consideration.
- Dr. Hoskin's will be participating in the FPT Health Minister's Meetings, taking place June 27-29th in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and is meeting with stakeholders at that time. This will be the first opportunity for provinces – aside from the Western Premier's statement on pharmacare – to comment on their positioning in the current process.
- The public narrative on pharmacare is not yet cast, but it is anticipated that with a significant amount of work will take place over quiet days of summer (when it can at times be more difficult to gain traction on an issue publicly), the fall will be a key opportunity for heightened public debate on a path forward for pharmacare.

Over the coming days and weeks, Santis will be providing key reflections on the path forward that the government and council has set.

Key Contacts: Pharmacare

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Advisory Council Biographies

- **Mia Homsy**, Director General of the Institut du Québec: Ms. Homsy has significant experience in the Quebec Government, having served the Minister of Economic Development and Innovation, Minister of Finance and held a senior role to the Leader of the Official Opposition before joining the Institut du Québec.
- **Dr. Nadine Caron**, Co-Director of UBC Excellence in Indigenous Health: currently resides in Prince George, BC where she provides surgical oncology care for those that call rural and remote Canada home. Nadine is also an associate professor in the UBC Faculty of Medicine's Department of Surgery where she teaches in the Northern Medical Program. During her surgical residency, Nadine completed a Master's in Public Health from Harvard University and was awarded UBC's Top Student Award. Nadine is also appointed as an Associate Faculty member of the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University where she teaches for the Center for American Indian Health.

Nadine is Anishnawbe from Sagamok First Nation. Her work involves a variety of audiences and knowledge users including governments, provincial health authorities, national medical organizations, health research funding bodies, and several universities to achieve identified and overlapping objectives. In 2014, Dr Caron was appointed Co-Director of the UBC Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health located at UBC's School of Population and Public Health.

- **Mr. Vincent Dumez**, Co-Director of Centre of Excellence on Partnerships with Patients at the University of Montreal: Mr. Vincent Dumez holds a finance degree and a master in science of management from Montreal's international business school Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC). Up until 2010, Mr. Dumez was an associate in one of Montreal's most influential consulting firm where he acted as a senior

strategic consultant. Suffering from severe chronic diseases for more than three decades, M. Dumez has been actively involved in the promotion of the 'patient partner' concept at Université de Montréal. This involvement has come forward over the recent years through the completion of his master's dissertation on patient-doctor relationship, his contribution to the training of patients, his work on boards of healthcare organizations and his involvement as a speaker in healthcare conferences. Since 2010, Mr. Dumez has developed the patient partnership program at the Faculty of Medicine. He's now co-leading with Dr. Antoine Boivin the Centre of Excellence on Partnership with the patients and public.

- **Camille Orridge**, Senior Fellow at the Wellesley Institute: Previously, Ms. Orridge also served as CEO of the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network and CEO of the Toronto Central Community Care Access Centre and is co-founder of Pathways to Education, the successful stay-in-school program for high-school students.
- **Ms. Diana Whalen**: former MLA in Nova Scotia between 2003-2017. In the first mandate of Premier McNeil's government, Ms. Whalen served as Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance as well as Attorney General and Minister of Justice.
- **John Wright**: 30 years of public-sector experience, including as deputy minister of Health and deputy minister of Finance for the Government of Saskatchewan. He also served as president and CEO of several crown agencies in that province, including SaskPower, Crown Investments Corporation and Saskatchewan Government Insurance. Most recently, Mr. Wright served as President and CEO of the Canadian Institute of Health Information.