



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

January 31, 2023

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Honourable Premiers,

It is of the upmost importance that the upcoming first ministers' meeting result in tangible action that will improve the health and well-being of children, youth, and families. Too many Canadians are struggling without adequate access to essential health services, and their physical and mental health and well-being are being directly compromised as a result. Immediate, solutions-oriented action is needed to redress long-standing inequities and ultimately, to save lives.

Increased funding is needed through both the Canada Health Transfer and the promised Canada Mental Health Transfer to right-size historical injustices, meet the unprecedented demands and unique challenges of today, and anticipate and be able to respond to the needs of tomorrow. As you meet to discuss the many challenges facing the healthcare system today, I urge you not to overlook the crises in paediatric healthcare that have become all too visible in recent months.

Most children's hospitals are consistently operating at or above 100 percent capacity and far too many families are struggling without access to primary care providers. Fewer than 20 percent of children and youth who require mental health care are receiving appropriate treatment and paediatric psychologic assessment and psychotherapy have become essentially unavailable through publicly funded systems. Across the country children are now waiting longer for many essential health services than adults. Despite being a wealthy country that prides itself on its universal health system, we have disproportionately and systemically underinvested in child and youth health and well-being.

Sustained and results-oriented investments are needed to right this wrong, support health care workers and build capacity across the spectrum of care, clear surgical backlogs and years-long waitlists, and ensure that all children and youth have access to the care they need, when and where they need it.

Sincerely,

Mark Feldman, MD FRCPC
CPS President

Cc. Premiers Heather Stefanson, François Legault, Blaine Higgs, Dennis King, Danielle Smith, Caroline Cochrane, P.J. Akeeagok, Doug Ford, Tim Houston, David Eby, Scott Moe, Andrew Furey, Ranj Pillai