

THE GROUP OF SEVEN HEALTH PROFESSIONS

3400 - 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, ON K1S 5R2

May 6, 2002

Dear Mr. Romanow:

Several years ago, the Executive Directors of the seven national associations listed below began meeting to discuss issues of mutual concern. These discussions focus primarily on issues that impede Canadians' access to the services of the regulated health professionals represented by our organizations. We are convinced that we have, collectively, a unique and critically important contribution to make to your inquiry.

The members of our associations play a significant role in providing important services in Canada's evolving health and health care system. As reported by the Canadian Institute for Health Information in *Health Personnel in Canada, 1991 to 2001*, our organizations represent over 90,000 health professionals. This is in contrast, for example, to 58,000 physicians and surgeons or 30,000 family medicine physicians.

The services provided by our members contribute to the wellness and quality of life of all the residents of Canada. Our services are supported by research, respected by colleagues and sought by health care consumers. We provide services across the continuum of health and health care including wellness promotion, disease and injury prevention, curative services, rehabilitation services, chronic disease and disability management and palliative care. The health and health care challenges of the present and the future will be addressed in no small measure by the creative interaction between Canadians and our members.

We believe that the health and well-being of the residents of Canada are adversely affected by their lack of equal and adequate access to our services. In addition, unrealistically restrictive scopes of practice, legislation, regulations and facility practices seriously impede effective care. The services of some of these professionals are being passively privatised, all too often without plans for providing reasonable access for Canadians of modest incomes.

Our associations strongly support your efforts to examine the Canadian health and health care "system" on behalf of all Canadians. We have submitted briefs, met with you and/or Commission staff and appeared during the public hearings. These activities have been on behalf of our individual professional constituencies and the Canadians who need and use their services.

We would like the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the broader issues that affect us all. We believe this would be of benefit to you as you struggle with the Solomonic task of finding answers to some very complex but vitally important questions.

If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact any of the signatories below.

Thank you for your consideration of this invitation. Please address your response to Ms. Claudia von Zweck at the address on the letterhead.

Yours sincerely,

Claudia von Zweck
Executive Director
Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists

Eugenia Repetur Moreno
Executive Director, Canadian Association of Social Workers

Sharon Fotheringham
Manager of Professional Standards
Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists.

Jeff Poston
Executive Director
Canadian Pharmacists Association

John Service
Executive Director
Canadian Psychological Association

Pamela C. Fralick
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Physiotherapy Association

Marsha Sharp
Executive Director
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