

# HEAL



January 12, 2018

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor  
Minister of Health  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0A6  
Sent by email to: [Ginette.PetitpasTaylor@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Ginette.PetitpasTaylor@parl.gc.ca)

Re: Support for Canada's Healthy Eating Strategy from Health Professionals in Canada

Dear Minister Petitpas Taylor,

Collectively, as a group of health professional associations and organizations within HEAL, we are writing to express our appreciation for and support of your Department's work on the Healthy Eating Strategy. HEAL (Organizations for Health Action) is a coalition of 40 national health professional associations and non-government health organizations dedicated to protecting and strengthening Canada's health care system and the health of Canadians. Collectively, we represent more than 650,000 providers and consumers of health care.

Our coalition invited Dr Hasan Hutchinson, Director-General, Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion, to present an overview of the Healthy Eating evidence at our recent meeting on December 7, 2017. We appreciated the opportunity to discuss details and plans that aim "to improve the food environment in Canada, to make it easier for Canadians to make the healthier choice".

Many of our organizations have already contributed detailed input and evidence, informed through our health professional practice and expertise, to the numerous federal public consultations conducted by your department and others. We recognize your mandate as the Minister of Health to promote public health, and applaud your Department's critical role in developing this suite of policies and regulations as a strategy, based on high-quality scientific evidence.

Specifically, we, the undersigned, as a coalition of associations and organizations support:

- improving healthy eating information – through evidence-based dietary guidance and updated Canada's Food Guide tools,
- protecting vulnerable populations – especially through restrictions of marketing unhealthy foods and beverages directed to children,
- strengthening labelling and claims – with particular emphasis on the clarity of the Nutrition Facts table, ingredient list and new front-of-package labelling about nutrients of public health concern,
- improving nutrition quality standards – through monitoring and enforcement actions, including surveillance on sodium reduction efforts by food processors and foodservice establishments; we applaud the recent success in prohibiting partially hydrogenated oils in Canadian foods, and,
- supporting increased access to and availability of nutritious foods – in healthier food environments across Canada and particularly in remote and northern regions.

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Further, we deeply appreciate the inter-departmental, collaborative work between Agriculture and Agri-food Canada and Health Canada, aligning the Health Canada's regulatory and policy initiatives with the overarching dimensions within A Food Policy for Canada.

These multi-pronged strategies are needed to promote population health and reduce the burden of diet-related disease. There is no one effective approach to achieve the improvements needed for a healthy and sustainable food system, healthier food environments and ultimately, a healthier population in Canada.

Minister Petitpas Taylor, we would be pleased to meet with you in the future to review and reinforce the views of our associations and organizations signed below. Best wishes in your Department's critical work in the coming year.

Sincerely,

François Couillard  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Association of Medical Radiation  
Technologists  
HEAL Co-Chair

Ondina Love, CAE  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Dental Hygienists Association  
HEAL Co-Chair

Nathalie Savoie  
Chief Executive Officer  
Dietitians of Canada

Janet Craik  
Executive Director  
Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists

Laurie Clement  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Association of Optometrists

Anne Ferguson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Cardiovascular Society

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Organizations for Health Action

Andrew Lewarne, RMT, CAE  
Secretary  
Canadian Massage Therapists' Alliance

Mike Villeneuve, RN MSc.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Nurses Association

Brad Brookman  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA)

Christine Nielsen, MBA (c) BHA, MLT, CAE  
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Eric Evers, CFE, CNM  
CSNM President  
Canadian Society of Nutrition Management

Francine Lemire, MD, CCFP, FCFP  
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer  
The College of Family Physicians of Canada

Paul-Émile Cloutier  
President and CEO  
HealthCareCAN

cc. Simon Kennedy, Deputy Minister, Health Canada  
Christine Donoghue, Associate Deputy Minister, Health Canada  
Pierre Sabourin, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada, Health Canada  
Kendal Weber, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada  
Karen McIntyre, Director General, Food Directorate, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada  
Dr William Yan, Director, Food Directorate, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada  
Dr Hasan Hutchinson, Director General, Office Nutrition Policy & Promotion, Health Canada  
Hon Lawrence MacAulay, Minister, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada

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Canadian Society of  
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