



August 28, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

On behalf of **Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery**, we would like to thank you and the Government of Canada for your ongoing efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, protect the health and wellbeing of Canadians and facilitate Canada's health and economic recovery.

The pandemic has put the strength of Canada's health research enterprise and health innovation ecosystem on public display, preventing additional deaths, advancing evidence-based solutions and supplying the expertise required to emerge from lockdown and restart our economy. All stakeholders across the health innovation ecosystem—which includes academic health science centres, research hospitals, universities, colleges, health and biosciences companies and health charities—stepped up to the challenge of COVID-19 and have helped to keep Canadians safe and healthy throughout these difficult times by advancing critical research into the virus and disease, developing new treatments and diagnostics, and continuing to support the most vulnerable Canadians in their communities.

As the Government prepares its Speech from the Throne for Parliament's return on September 23, **we want to take this opportunity to encourage you to recognize in the Speech the vital role that our health research enterprise and health innovation ecosystem have played in addressing the pandemic and continue to play in addressing the myriad of ongoing health concerns facing Canadians every day.**

We also urge you to recognize that **Canada's health research enterprise and health innovation ecosystem are dedicated to not only responding to the COVID-19 pandemic; they are also committed to advancing innovative preventive measures, treatments, therapies and diagnostics for other ongoing health concerns like cancer, and chronic diseases like diabetes.** These illnesses and health concerns continue to impact millions of Canadians every day, despite

the effect of the pandemic. Indeed, we know that many pre-existing health conditions, such as heart disease and mental illnesses, are exacerbated by COVID-19 and the social restrictions put in place to limit its spread. It is of vital importance that we continue to support research and innovation in these areas alongside our efforts to ensure our preparedness for future infectious diseases.

While the federal support shown towards Canadian health research throughout the pandemic has been greatly appreciated, it is important to assure the health research and innovation communities and the patients who benefit from their world-class advancements in medicine that the Government of Canada will continue to commit to supporting Canadian health research and innovation. This includes making commitments to **deepen our investments in Canadian fundamental science; to recognize and support the unique needs of our research hospitals and academic research institutes at the forefront of clinical and patient-centred research; to enhance supports for trainees and post-doctoral fellows; to digitalize Canada's health system; and to implement policies that enhance the health and biosciences sector's capacity to do business in Canada, like those recommended by the Health and Biosciences Economic Strategy Table.** As we outline in [our recent Submission to the Standing Committee on Finance's Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2021 Budget](#), these actions can help to restart the Canadian economy and ensure the health and wellbeing of Canadians as we collectively recover from the pandemic.

Health research and health innovation have given us a way through this pandemic and is saving us from disaster. They give all Canadians hope. Recognizing the important role the health research enterprise and health innovation ecosystem play in the recovery from the pandemic in the upcoming Speech from the Throne and stating your intention to commit federal investments in these sectors will position us to do so much more for Canada's recovery period and for the ongoing health and wellbeing of Canadians.

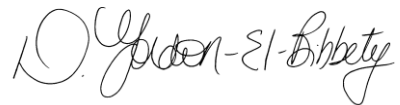
Sincerely,



Rose Goldstein, MD, FRCPC  
Chair



Ryan Wiley, PhD  
Policy Advisor to the Board



Deborah Gordon-El-Bihbey  
President and CEO

cc. The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health  
The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry  
The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
Dr. Robert McMaster, Past Chair, Research Canada