



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Canadian Government Needs to Jumpstart Health Care Innovation

Introduction of Physician Assistants in All Provinces would improve care and save money

October 23, 2015, Toronto –“Canada’s health care system would provide better, more affordable quality care if Physician Assistants (PAs) were being used more broadly” said Chris Rhule, President of the Canadian Association of Physician Assistants (CAPA). Days after Canada elected a new government that committed to investing in health care, the Association is calling for investments to encourage and incent provincial governments to move quickly to introduce or expand the number of PAs working in the country.

“When I talk to the leaders of other global PA Associations they’re shocked when I tell them how few there are,” said Rhule. “Without PAs in the U.S. for example, the system would fall apart. PAs are integral to access in the U.S. With our aging population and a renewed focus on caring for seniors, we know that we can help improve access and reduce wait times - while saving the system money.”

PAs are currently practicing in Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Alberta in emergency rooms, primary care, orthopedics etc. PAs in these jurisdictions are helping to provide better, faster and affordable care to patients in every environment they practice in. In all cases, studies have demonstrated that patients and providers are seeing the benefits that PAs bring to the health system.

“By encouraging provincial governments to hire PAs or expand PA programs, the federal government would be taking real steps toward improving healthcare systems across the country,” said Rhule. “In an era when most governments are struggling to manage health costs and looking for innovative ways to better care for our aging population, it just makes sense to move quickly to ensure we’re taking full advantage of these valuable members of the healthcare team.”

A recent poll conducted by Nanos revealed that 8 out of 10 Canadians would support a greater role for PAs. Not surprisingly, seniors were most supportive with 88% of those surveyed indicating they would support a greater role for PAs.

On October 23 almost half of Canada’s Physician Assistants are gathering in Toronto calling on government to invest in additional positions for PAs not only in Ontario but across the country.

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