



Nurses for Medicare
Les infirmières et infirmiers
pour l'assurance-maladie

2 October 2008

Open letter to the Canadian Federal Political Party Leaders

Canada's nurses, through their work on the front lines of health care, have first-hand knowledge of how to improve the effectiveness of our health system. We know that solutions to current health system challenges lie not in expanding private health care but in supporting innovation, applying technology, increasing the number of health professionals and achieving efficiencies through new models of care.

Research over the years has consistently shown that privatization and two-tier systems do not improve quality of service, outcomes or wait times. We believe that a publicly funded, not-for-profit health system is the most effective and ethical way to provide health care. We support the fundamental premise that access to health care should be based on need, not on ability to pay. That is why the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) support Nurses for Medicare (www.nursesformedicare.ca), a grassroots initiative that provides information, tools and support for nurses advocating for the sustainability of the system.

Nurses for Medicare is asking Canada's federal political parties to promise to work with the provincial and territorial governments to:

- impose a moratorium on for-profit expansion in the health system;
- expand publicly funded, not-for-profit care (e.g., pharmacare and home care); and
- enforce the *Canada Health Act*.

We ask that your party fully disclose its position on health in general and on the protection of medicare specifically.

We know that your party shares with CNA and CFNU the goal of ensuring that all Canadians receive safe and timely access to health services. We urge you to support Nurses for Medicare and our call for action.

Sincerely,

Kaaren Neufeld
President
Canadian Nurses Association

Linda Silas
President
Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions