

*Please adapt to send to your Member of Parliament, MLA or MPP*

May 12, 2020

The Hon. Patty Hajdu, PC MP  
Minister of Health  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
Canada  
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Dear Minister Hajdu:

The health, social and economic impacts of the volume and complexity of grief resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with Canada's fragmented, under-resourced and insufficient grief support services, will have prolonged, adverse psychological effects on countless Canadians.

People working in healthcare and first responders are already suffering from increased grief-related work trauma that could impact retention of these highly qualified personnel. Unresolved grief creates significant downstream costs to health systems and the economy.

Experts in grief and psychosocial services across Canada have come together as the Canadian Grief Alliance, led by the Canadian Virtual Hospice, to support a comprehensive two-phased action plan to proactively anticipate, mitigate and address the health, social, and therefore economic impacts of the pandemic for grieving Canadians.

The plan will immediately implement initiatives to support frontline healthcare providers with their grief-related work trauma; increase access to grief supports and resources for the public; increase public awareness of grief and healthy coping strategies; and respond to the specific needs of underserved grieving populations. The second phase will develop and implement a consultation-driven national strategy to encompass policy, programs, research and education initiatives that will position Canada to better support the needs of grieving Canadians. The \$100 million investment, administered by Health Canada, will be directed to sustaining and expanding access to grief and bereavement services over three years. The \$10 million injection into research will assist the response to pandemic-related grief.

I/We support this because.....

What sets Canadians apart in the world is how we care for each other in times of great need. I/we are asking for your support of this crucial investment in grief and bereavement services to help mitigate the very real and potentially devastating impacts on grieving Canadians.

Thank you and keep safe.

