



April 18, 2024

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

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The Honourable Mark Holland
Minister of Health

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The Honourable Randy Boissonnault
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages

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The Honourable Gudie Hutchings
Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for ACOA

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Dear Ministers

On behalf of the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) and the Canadian Association of Pharmacy Students and Interns (CAPSI), we would like to thank the government for its commitment to include pharmacists among the professions eligible for the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program, as outlined in the 2024 Budget. This policy adjustment will make a real difference in the lives of new pharmacists and, crucially, of the communities they serve.

The allocation of \$250 million significantly enhances the capacity of health-care professionals to serve these underserved areas. By expanding this vital program to encompass a broader range of health-care professionals, the government not only aids in the recruitment and retention of necessary providers but also uplifts the entire health-care system.

As the government begins its work to expand the program, we are hopeful that it will consider parity in loan forgiveness. Given the comparable levels of tuition fees paid by pharmacists and physicians, it is both fair and appropriate to align their eligibility for loan forgiveness. This adjustment would not only rectify a long-standing disparity, but also reinforce the value and contributions of pharmacists within the health-care system.

Thank you once again for your leadership and attention to this critical issue. We look forward to working with you and your teams to support the promotion and implementation of the changes.

Sincerely

Glen Doucet
Chief Executive Officer
CPhA

Madison Wong
President
CAPSI

Nolan Barkhouse
Vice President, Professional Affairs
CAPSI