



January 23, 2020

The Honourable Patty Hadju  
Minister of Health  
70 Columbine Driveway  
Tunney's Pasture  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Hadju:

I am writing to you to show my support for Health Canada's continued efforts to support people living in pain through the work of the Canadian Pain Taskforce. The Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA) is a national, voluntary organization representing Canadian with arthritis, many of whom live with daily chronic pain.

We met with your predecessor, The Honourable Ginette Pettipas-Taylor, in September 2018 prior to Health Canada's Opioid Symposium to discuss the impact of opioid policy on people living with arthritis. We presented the preliminary results of a survey we circulated within our network on the topic and have since presented these results in a poster presentation at the 2019 CADTH Symposium. We are currently developing two resources, one for patients and the other for policy makers, to support this important priority.

It was disappointing that the needs of chronic pain patients were not specifically mentioned in your new mandate letter from the Prime Minister. People living in pain are certainly impacted by the opioid crisis and misinformed opioid policy decisions have been made as a result of failing to consult with people living with pain. CAPA has been very involved in the work of the Canadian Pain Task Force announced in April 2019 with our board members attending the stakeholder consultations and our President is a member of the Task Force. The announcement of the Task Force was incredible for Canadians living with chronic pain and an important first step in improving their lives and health outcomes. In fact, it was the beginning of reversing the unintended harms inflicted on chronic pain patients by misinformed opioid policy. The work of the Task Force has given hope to so many and it is only part way through its

*The Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance is a grass-roots, patient driven, independent, national organization with members across Canada and supporters in Canada and beyond. We believe the first expert on arthritis is the individual who lives with. We provide a strong voice and concerted effort to promote the well-being of people living with arthritis and we assist our members to become advocates not only for themselves but for all people with arthritis.*



mandate. The Task Force has achieved a lot through bringing together of the Canadian pain community and more successes are yet to come.

We hope that the continued support of the Canadian Pain Task Force will transform the lives of those living with chronic pain and allow them to once again fully participate in society.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Laurie Proulx', on a light blue background.

Laurie Proulx  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance