



May 4, 2020

Mr. Ron McKinnon  
Chair, House of Commons  
Standing Committee on Health  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Chair:

I am writing to you given the unprecedented times in which we live. COVID-19 is having a significant impact on Canadians. Its impact is biological, psychological, social and economic.

While we continue to stay home, practice physical distancing and look to a brighter day when we can begin to re-open the economy, isolation, job loss and insecurity, worry for ourselves and our loved ones are taking a toll. Prolonged isolation and physical distancing can lead to increased depression, anxiety, suicidal crisis and violence. The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) is concerned that long after we return to some semblance of normal life, the mental health impacts of the pandemic on Canadians will linger.

Federal programs such as *Wellness Together Canada* and others announced by the provinces and territories will provide guidance and information about coping with COVID-19 to many Canadians. However, more specialized and individual care will be needed by those Canadians with pre-existing mental health conditions and by those who develop them as a result of the psychosocial and economic stressors of COVID-19. In this context, psychological treatments are evidence-based and effective solutions for the mental health problems and disorders Canadians face, and they deserve access to them.

Both now and in the foreseeable future, Canadians will need more and not less health care, including psychological care. The CPA stands ready to work with you, and/or the Standing Committee, to find sustainable solutions that keep Canadians mentally as well as physically healthy; our success as a country depends on it.

I would appreciate a meeting to discuss this issue further with you at your earliest convenience, and can be reached at [executiveoffice@cpa.ca](mailto:executiveoffice@cpa.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Cohen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" and the last name "Cohen" clearly legible.

K. R. Cohen, Ph.D., C. Psych  
Chief Executive Officer

Copies to: Mr. Matt Jeneroux, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on Health  
Mr. Luc Theriault, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on Health  
The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Federal Minister of Health  
Provincial-Territorial Psychological Associations

*The CPA is the national voice for the science, practice and education of psychology in the service of the health and welfare of Canadians. The CPA is Canada's largest association for psychology and represents psychologists in public and private practice, university educators and researchers across sectors, as well as students. Psychologists are the country's largest group of regulated and specialized mental health providers, outnumbering psychiatrists about 4:1, making our profession a key resource for the mental health treatment Canadians need.*