Addressing the needs of our aging population in a new Health Accord

In 2015 for the first time in Canada's history, persons aged 65 years and older outnumbered those under 15 years of age.¹

Our health care system must adapt to the changing needs of our aging population.

As the federal minister of health engages with the provinces and territories in the development of a new Health Accord, the CMA is highlighting areas in need of innovation.

Expanding home care services in a new Health Accord

Home care comprises an array of services provided in home and community settings. These include health promotion and teaching, rehabilitation, support and maintenance, palliative end-of-life care and integration and support for family caregivers.

Care in the community is one of the most cost-effective ways to meet the needs of elderly patients. On average, an occupied hospital bed costs about $846/day; home care costs about $55/day.¹

Apart from the potential savings, around nine out of 10 seniors want to live at home as long as possible.

Access to home care is inconsistent across Canada, however, and many Canadians have unmet home care needs. In 2012, approximately 461,000 adults who needed home care did not receive it.²

The availability of home care could be expanded by investing in new innovative models and scaling up promising practices already taking place across the country.

What is the CMA recommending?

To scale up and expand examples of excellence and innovation, the CMA recommends that the government establish a new targeted home care innovation fund.

What would this recommendation cost?

As outlined in the Liberal Party of Canada's election platform, the CMA recommends that the fund deliver $3 billion over four years, including $400 million in 2017-18.

¹ Statistics Canada. Population projections: Canada, the provinces and territories, 2013 to 2063.