



**ASSOCIATION CATHOLIQUES  
CANADIENNE DE LA SANTÉ**

**CATHOLIC HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CHAC LAUNCHES ELECTION ACTION**

Ottawa — The Catholic Health Association of Canada (CHAC) urges its members to become actively involved in the federal election campaign. The Association released an “Election Strategy Package” that calls on members to participate in the electoral process by examining the current health issues facing Canadians.

The federal government’s decrease in transfer payments to the provinces for health and social programs is identified as a threat to Ottawa’s ability to maintain national standards in health. Also included are questions around present pharmaceutical policy. CHAC proposes that the federal government institute a national, universal drug insurance plan to control drug expenditures and costs and to improve appropriate access.

The election strategy bases many of its statements on the fundamental principle that human life deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and is worthy of protection at all its stages, especially when most vulnerable. CHAC urges candidates to support the Special Senate Committee’s recommendation that euthanasia and assisted suicide continue to be offenses under the Criminal Code. On another issue, CHAC concludes that the pre-born infant should be given equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination. The Association also calls on those seeking election to insure that palliative care programs receive top priority in the restructuring of the health care system.

The information package contains a summary of key health issues along with concerns being raised over government policy. CHAC’s members are encouraged to bring their concerns to local candidates during the campaign, equipped with a list of questions to ask and guidelines on organizing meetings with candidates.

Seven fact sheets provide CHAC’s platform on a wide range of topics the role of the federal government in health care; pharmaceutical policy; employment and social justice; child poverty; euthanasia and assisted suicide; palliative care; and the health of the pre-born infant.

On the issue of unemployment, the fact sheet reports a direct relationship between poverty and decreased health, just as prosperity brings improved health and well-being to citizens. Access to decent fulltime employment is still the key to economic and social security, the Association says.

“This election campaign offers all Canadians an opportunity to ask tough questions to those who want to govern us about some of the most fundamental issues facing our society,” said Raymond Lafond, Chairperson of the CHAC.