



ASSOCIATION CATHOLIQUES
CANADIENNE DE LA SANTÉ

CATHOLIC HEALTH
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2000

CHAC Annual Assembly Calls on Federal Government to Protect Canada's Health Care System

Annual Assembly resolutions address for-profit delivery of health care, reproductive technologies legislation, food safety issues, and genetic research

Ottawa - At the 2000 Convention of the Catholic Health Association of Canada (CHAC), held in Victoria, BC, April 8-10, participants of the Annual Assembly approved several resolutions calling on the federal government to act on a number of key health issues - genetic research; human reproductive technology legislation; food safety legislation and concerns over genetically engineered food; and the province of Alberta's plan to allow for the delivery of publicly funded health services by for-profit corporations.

"These resolutions represent an affirmation of the fundamental principles that gave rise to our health system and a desire to protect such core values as respect for the human person and protection of the vulnerable," said Sister Annette Noël, SP, CHAC chairperson.

Issue 1 - Private, For-Profit Delivery of Health Care Services Resolved,

1. That the CHAC urge the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health:
 - to provide sufficient funds in provincial transfers to reform the health care system and to support its necessary expansion in the areas of health promotion and prevention, home care, community care and pharmacare; and
 - to actively oppose plans by any province that would lead to the further commercialization of health care, to an expanded role for for-profit health care, or to the practice of extra-billing; and
2. that CHAC members write to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health urging them to protect Canada's publicly funded health care system, and to address the above-mentioned issues.

Issue 2 - Reproductive and Genetic Technologies Legislation

Resolved,

1. That the CHAC urge the Minister of Health to ensure that the soon-to-be-introduced legislation for reproductive and genetic technologies establishes prohibitions and a regulatory system that reflect the values framework put forward by the Association; and
2. that CHAC members urge members of Parliament and the Minister of Health to ensure that such a values base is reflected in the bill.

Issue 3 - Food Safety Legislation and Genetically Engineered Foods

Resolved,

1. That the CHAC call on the Minister of Health, the Agri-Food Minister and the Industry Minister to establish immediately mandatory labelling requirements for genetically engineered foods; and
2. that the CHAC urge the Minister of Health and the Agri-Food Minister to introduce new food safety legislation that addresses the major flaws that have been identified in Bill C-80; and
3. that CHAC members write letters urging the government to establish mandatory labelling for genetically engineered foods, and to introduce new comprehensive food safety legislation.

Issue 4 - Genetic Research

Resolved,

1. That the CHAC become more proactive in linking with like-minded organizations in raising awareness across Canada about the major ethical implications of rapid developments in genetics (e.g. cloning of human DNA, human gene mapping, gene therapies, genetic screening, marketing of human DNA, research).