



Premiers Announce Health Care Innovation Working Group

VICTORIA, January 17, 2012 -- Premiers announced that Prince Edward Island Premier Robert Ghiz and Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall will co-chair a Health Care Innovation Working Group composed of all provincial and territorial health ministers. While acknowledging that Canada's provinces and territories are pursuing innovation in their own jurisdictions, Premiers recognize that more can be done together.

Premiers are committed to the proposition that ongoing collaboration and cooperation is essential to providing Canadians with access to the best health care in the world. The purpose of this provincial and territorial initiative is to drive a collaborative process for transformation and innovation to help ensure the sustainable delivery of health care services. This focus on innovation will also seek to enhance provincial/territorial capacity to better meet new challenges in our health care systems, including the needs of seniors, patients with chronic diseases and Northern populations.

The Health Care Innovation Working Group will provide its first report at the July 2012 Council of the Federation annual meeting in Halifax.

"This is a bold move with real timelines," said Premier Christy Clark, chair of this week's Council of the Federation meeting. "The message we want to send is that we are working together to innovate and provide better care for seniors and all Canadians."

"This crucial work will be done under the leadership of Premiers working with health care providers", Premier Robert Ghiz said, "They are the untapped strength of the system."

"This year marks the 50th anniversary of Medicare" noted Premier Brad Wall. " Premiers want to create a new approach that provides better quality care while being sustainable."

In consultation with health care providers, over the next six months the working group will focus on:

- Scope of practice: examining the scope of practice of health care providers and teams in order to better meet patient and population needs in a safe, competent and cost effective manner.
- Human resources management: address health human resource challenges and explore more coordinated management to address competition across health systems.
- Clinical practice guidelines: accelerating the development and adoption of best clinical and surgical practice guidelines so that all Canadians benefit from up-to-date practices.

It is expected that the chairs and provincial/territorial health ministers will meet at least two times prior to reporting progress in July.

- 30 -

For more information:

Robert Pauliszyn
Government of British Columbia
Cell: 250-213-5096
Robert.pauliszyn@gov.bc.ca