



May 14, 2024

The Honourable Ratna Omidvar, Senator  
Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology  
The Senate of Canada  
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A4  
Canada

Re: Committee Study of the Pharmacare Act, Bill C-64

Dear Senator,

In anticipation of the committee's consideration and selection of witnesses to participate in the study of the Pharmacare Act, Bill C-64, the Smart Health Benefits Coalition (SHBC) wishes to express its intention and desire to appear at committee. We wish to offer the perspective of the group benefits industry, including the employers and employees we work with day in and day out, to the committee as it considers the Pharmacare Act.

The SHBC is a united advocate for smart, innovative solutions that result in timely and positive change for uninsured and underinsured Canadians. The SHBC is comprised of over a thousand workplace advisors across every province who help employers implement and manage their group benefits and group retirement plans, providing comprehensive coverage to over 10 million Canadians. Our local businesspeople support more than 65,000 small and medium-sized employers with their employee drug plans, including over 4,800 union member plans.

As such, we are deeply knowledgeable and experienced stakeholders who are an important part of the discussion about health and drug benefits that will affect the thousands of employers and union bargaining agents we support and advise, along with the millions of Canadian families who have comprehensive coverage provided by these plans and the services and support SHBC members provide to them in turn.

Leveraging the knowledge and experience SHBC members have working each day with employers and Canadian families, we wish to offer Senators and Canadians our views and recommendations that we believe will strengthen the opportunity presented by a national pharmacare approach.

This includes our shared dedication to solving for accessibility and affordability, especially for the 1 in 5 Canadians who report difficulty affording medicines, and advancing important social policy objectives, such as no-cost access for all Canadians to Diabetes and Contraceptive medications and devices, and eventually a more robust essential formulary.

Focusing new taxpayer funds on those struggling in the gaps or with high-cost treatments, while not disrupting millions of middle-class families' plans that are working well, will allow governments to do more, for more people, faster.

We know our appearance as a witness would provide value to the committee's study of the Pharmacare Act and would welcome the opportunity to share our knowledge with members of the committee.

Sincerely,

*Carolyn Eagan*

Carolyn Eagan  
Principal Spokesperson  
Smart Health Benefits Coalition

Cc: Members of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology

The Honourable Jane Cordy, Senator  
Deputy Chair

The Honourable Wanda Thomas Bernard, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Sharon Burey, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Rene Cormier, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Donna Dasko, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Marilou McPhedran, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Marie-Francoise Megie, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Rosemary Moodie, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Chantal Petitclerc, Senator  
Member

The Honourable Judith G. Seidman, Senator  
Member