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December 17, 2021

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Subject: Please pause the proposed PMPRB changes to allow real consultation

Dear Minister Duclos,

We would like to extend our sincere congratulations on your appointment to the Minister of Health for the Government of Canada. We are looking forward to having someone with your experience and perspective in the role as we respond to the health system challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are writing to you on behalf of Canadians affected by over 137 types of blood cancers who are deeply concerned by the proposed changes by the Patented Medicines Pricing Review Board (PMPRB) regulations. When these regulations go into effect on January 1, 2022, it will change how the price of new medicines are regulated in Canada. We are urging the government to pause the implementation until more consultation can be done.

We are concerned about the impact that these proposed changes will have on companies offering precision medicines and innovative new medicines. Small and large pharmaceutical companies as well as other patient groups, pharmacists, doctors, and academics have indicated that it will be very difficult to adapt to the changes proposed by the PMPRB and, as a result, new therapies will face barriers in Canada which will slow or prevent access to new medicines. Canada needs a fair regulatory environment and process for new medicines, but the proposed policy changes will make Canada an unfavourable market for launching new drugs and clinical trials.

In a joint effort to raise the concerns of Canadian patients and their families, we have come together with a group of patient organizations to call on the federal government to pause the implementation of the proposed changes and reconsider the changes through democratic consultation in the new year. There is a more balanced approach to be achieved if we work together that will lower prices and protect Canada's place as a country who has access to new medicines and clinical trials.

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We would greatly appreciate your urgent action to pause implementation of the proposed changes to allow time for us discuss the concerns of patients and how you can help ensure Canada continues to have early access to new life-saving drugs and clinical trials.

Now more than ever, it is critical that the federal government creates an environment that fosters innovation in the life sciences and shows Canada's leadership in developing and providing new treatments and medicines.

Sincerely,

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