

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

Message from the Minister of Health Arthritis Alliance of Canada

Arthritis affects around 5 million Canadians. The joint stiffness and swelling it causes can make it very painful to move and can substantially reduce one's quality of life. Seniors are particularly affected by this condition; it is estimated that a third of senior men and half of senior women live with arthritis. As the population ages and the prevalence of arthritis increases, it has become more important than ever to find solutions to prevent and treat this disorder.

The Arthritis Alliance of Canada has been a leading voice in this area. Through collaborative research and advocacy, the Alliance members—health care professionals, researchers, funding agencies, governments, charities, industry partners, and patient groups—have demonstrated their steadfast commitment to improving the lives of Canadians living with arthritis.

The Government of Canada shares this commitment. Through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, we invest approximately \$20 million per year in arthritis research. While we have yet to find a cure, we continue to make progress in this field and have discovered a number of behaviours that can help to reduce symptoms in many people. These include regular moderate-intensity physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, avoiding alcohol, and eating a healthy diet that is low in sugar.

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I congratulate the Alliance and its members on developing innovative models of care for arthritis, and on successfully publishing those results in *The Journal of the Canadian Rheumatology Association*. It is my sincere hope that these models of care will take us a few steps closer to a world where we can all live free of the pain of arthritis.

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, P.C., M.P.

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