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February 9, 2004

**To: Honourable Carolyn Bennett
Minister of State (Public Health)**

c/o House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Carolyn:

I am writing you about several matters on behalf of the Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance. I attach a list of members for your convenience.

First, we are very pleased indeed with the public health related announcements in the Throne Speech and very happy that you are guiding the federal public health effort. We will do everything we can to assist with the development and management of federal activities on matters related to chronic disease.

Second, at a recent meeting we examined the implications of current trends in chronic disease for the future. Broadly speaking, these trends suggest that within a few years the health care system will be completely overwhelmed by people suffering from these diseases and that we must do much more now to attack their root causes. We decided, consequently, to prepare a new strategic vision of how we can intensify the provincial effort in Ontario and I have indicated to Mr. Smitherman that we will report to him on this matter in mid March. We will make these materials available to you at the same time.

Third, I wanted to note that the initial activities of our alliance were financially supported by Health Canada and that we very much appreciate the continuing interest in chronic disease shown by the staff of the department. We think that chronic disease management would be on any list of the top ten issues on the public agenda in Canada and from that perspective the interest and support of the department has been both strategic and much appreciated.

It was nice to renew our acquaintance at the ALPHA meeting at the Harbor Castle last week. I look forward to working with you again on health issues.

Sincerely,

David MacKinnon
Executive Director

c.c. Dr. Peter Wiebe, President, OPHA
Joel Weiner, Regional Director General, Health Canada
Members of the Alliance