# Take Care, Canada Blueprint for a National Self-Care Strategy

FOOD, HEALTH & CONSUMER PRODUCTS OF CANADA

**FHCP** 

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People are Canada's greatest healthcare resource, but their potential is too often underestimated and under-valued compared to the publicly-funded healthcare system. Canada should support self-care tools, information, products and services that help Canadians make healthy lifestyle choices, treat minor health ailments, manage — or, better yet, prevent — chronic diseases, and more.

## Canada needs a national self-care strategy now to:



Increase Canadians' capacity to take care of themselves



Save time, money, and resources





As the COVID-19 pandemic has made clearer than ever, Canadians want and need the resources, information, products and services to practice self-care as an effective, low-cost complement to investments in the publicly-funded healthcare system.

# Evidence shows self-care has substantial health, economic & social benefits

### In Canada

Minor shifts have major impacts. If just the 2% of Canadians with colds, headaches or heartburn who seek professional care despite mild to moderate symptoms practiced self-care instead, Canada could eliminate more than 3 million unneeded doctor visits annually and free up physician resources to allow an additional 500,000 Canadians access to a family doctor.

Switching prescription drugs to non-prescription status helps people manage their health, reduces healthcare costs, and boosts the Canadian economy.

## 3 major areas of impact

\$458

in reduced cost of medicines

\$290 million

in reduced cost for doctor visits

\$290 million

value of increased productivity and reduced absenteeism

# **Around the World**

According to the World Health Organization, self-care reduces costs and increases healthcare quality, access, and equity.





Every dollar spent on consumer health products saves an estimated 6-7 USD elsewhere in the healthcare system.

Reclassifying a few select prescription medicines as non-prescription could result in over 1 billion AUD savings.





Switching just 5% of medications prescribed to treat conditions suitable for self-care to non-prescription status would save more than 16 billion EUR.

When the National Health Service identified self-care as one of its four pillars and instituted supportive policies, use of publicly-funded healthcare services reduced significantly, health and quality of life improved, and patient satisfaction increased.

## The national self-care strategy must be:

interests

#### **Accountable**

Governments pursue measurable health objectives designed to produce better health outcomes for Canadians



#### **Empowering**

People are empowered, through education and support, to make and enact decisions about their health and well-being, and are meaningfully engaged in government decision-making

People-centred Individuals are seen as active participants in, rather than passive recipients of, health care, and actions are designed to meet their needs and

#### **Evidence-based**

Policies, programs, legislation, and regulations are based on the best available evidence

#### Collaborative

All levels of government, industry, academia, and non-government organizations work together to advance integrated solutions



# **Guiding** principles

#### Resource-optimized

manner

Resources are optimized to their full advantage with the objective of delivering improved health outcomes in a costeffective





#### Relevant

Actions considered and taken are responsive to the current environment and emerging trends

## The federal government must urgently focus on:

Building the foundation for a national self-care strategy

Conduct a parliamentary study on the benefits of self-care

# Regulating to maximize the benefits of self-care

Regulate for a digital environment

Integrate drug scheduling into the federal health product approval process

Create regulator accountability for achieving health benefits

# Supporting competitiveness and incentivizing innovation

Apply an economic lens to health product regulation

Remove unnecessary barriers to switching products from prescription to nonprescription status

#### Supporting Canadians to practice self-care

Improve self-care literacy

Implement taxation measures to support and incentivize selfcare practices

Opportunities for Federal Action