

Priorities for 2018 Federal Budget

Pre-Budget Submission

Prepared for: The House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance (FINA)

Prepared by: HealthPartners Canada – PartenaireSanté Canada

Submission Deadline: August 4, 2017 (11:59 p.m. EST)

July 31, 2017

About Us:

HealthPartners is a collaboration of 16 of Canada's most trusted health charities. Members include; ALS Canada, The Alzheimer Society of Canada, The Canadian Cancer Society, Diabetes Canada, The Canadian Hemophilia Society, Canadian Liver Foundation, Crohn's and Colitis Canada, Cystic Fibrosis Canada, Heart & Stroke, The Huntington Society of Canada, The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Muscular Dystrophy Canada, Parkinson Canada, The Arthritis Society, The Kidney Foundation of Canada and The Lung Association. Which together, represent some of the most devastating chronic diseases and serious illnesses faced by Canadians. Through a unique partnership with these charities, we engage and connect with employers and employees in the national, provincial and municipal public sectors and in private-sector workplaces across the country. Together we are working to reduce the incidence of chronic disease amongst Canadians; improve the health of employees in Canadian workplaces and; connect employees to the health charities that matter most to them.

Recently, HealthPartners undertook a collaboration with INCITE and their innovative and personalized technology platform. The project essentially combines the latest accurate information regarding major diseases and illness with the mechanism to help individuals get and stay healthy, through focusing on changing behavior in the areas that contribute to good health.

The Issue:

Unhealthy employees and workspaces contribute directly to illness, chronic disease, stress and depression. It is estimated that the annual loss, in direct cost and productivity, to the Canadian economy is approximately \$190 billion dollars.

Additionally, 87% of employees will be touched by one or more major illness/chronic disease, with the most prevalent of these (diabetes, heart disease, some cancers) preventable through lifestyle choices

The average number of paid sick days taken by public servants in the core public administration (CPA) was reported at 11.52 days per year in 2011-2012. PBO estimates the salary paid for sick days in the FPS at \$871 million in 2011-2012, approximately 68% higher than the estimate for 2001-2002 after accounting for inflationary factors.

Source: Fiscal Analysis of Sick Leave in the Federal Public Service (PBO 2014)

Presently, the average cost of short- and long-term disability is increasing, absenteeism and illness are on the rise and as a result productivity is declining. In fact, by age 20, 3/5 Canadians have a chronic disease profile (these are the employees of the future).

The Approach:

Research shows a clear linkage between healthy, engaged employees who feel their employer cares about their health and productivity. The HealthPartners/Incite program:

- Is supported by Canada's research based health charities
- Provides a one stop access to latest research & best practices
- Takes a total approach to health: ultimately using artificial intelligence to customize activities to individuals
- Allows individuals to assess their health against nine domains using a total health approach (i.e. physical health, mental health, financial health, sleep, etc.)
- Aligns with the highest security standards to ensure full privacy for participants, as employers have access only to aggregated data
- Rewards those who try, not just those who succeed (and adjusts and reacts to barriers) and is designed identify failure points and get users back on track.
- Extremely cost effective; actual savings will cover expenditures

There are currently four pilot projects underway, including Dalhousie University Staff, IWK Hospital (Halifax), Colours Media Group as well as HealthPartners (National) Staff.

The Ask:

We are asking the Committee to consider putting our request into their pre-budget report, we are looking for \$4,300,000 to fund the last three years of the commercialization phase. The milestones for the project would be as follows:

- Year One:** Pilot key departments, translation, incorporate leanings from pilots, develop AI component (key departments have already expressed interest in participating in pilots). Through a partnership with UNB, rigorous quantitative research metrics will be established and monitored throughout the life of the project.
- Year Two:** Benchmarks and baseline data identified; Annual report on usage to government
- Year Three:** Final adaptations
- Year Four:** System-wide roll out

Based on the available data, combined with the early results of our existing pilot, we would be looking at meeting, or exceeding, the following quantifiable objectives:

- Reduction in the average number of paid sick leave days per pilot department (1 day per employee)
- Increase in the number of employees reporting improved health outcomes (5%)
- 1% reduction in federal government employees reporting preventable chronic disease

Incite differs from tools currently available to Canadians in three critical ways. Firstly, the content is based upon cutting edge and world-class research supported by Canada's most respected health charities. Secondly, it is predicated on the notion that most Canadians will start – and stop – several times to improve their health (prior to realizing success) – and this tool rewards the effort and identifies the failure points. Thirdly, it will use a form of Artificial Intelligence to personalize the tool for each user. Finally, it will provide aggregated data to employers about the utilization and adherence rates, as well as reported improvements in health amongst the workforce. The link between employee health, absenteeism, presenteeism and productivity is incontrovertible. HealthPartners understands that illness and chronic disease are tough issues for employers to deal with. We are extremely excited about the impacts that this project can have on both the wellness and productivity of the civil service.

To that end, we would more than welcome an opportunity to appear before the Committee when you launch your pre-budget meetings in the fall and will indicate our interest through the identified process.

Respectfully,

Eileen Dooley
Chief Executive Officer | Chef de la direction
17 York St, Ottawa, ON K1N 5S7
P: 613-562-1469 x 223
C: 613-884-1358
F: 613-562-1471
E: edooley@HealthPartners.ca
Healthpartners.ca