



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02756**

BY: **MR. KMIEC (CALGARY SHEPARD)**

DATE: **OCTOBER 17, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **MR. JOHN OLIVER**

Response by the Minister of Health

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Health Care Services

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting the health of Canadians by strengthening Canada's health care system. This includes working with the Provinces and Territories to improve the affordability, accessibility and appropriate use of prescription drugs, including drugs used to treat Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA).

In Canada, the management of pharmaceuticals is the shared responsibility of federal, provincial and territorial governments. Health Canada is responsible for assessing the safety, efficacy and quality of drugs before authorizing them for sale in Canada. Health Canada approved Spinraza for sale in the summer of 2017 for the treatment of one type of SMA. Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for the delivery of health care for their residents, including determining the conditions under which drugs are reimbursed.

To inform these decisions, the public drug plans use the recommendations and advice of Health Technology Assessment Agencies such as the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH). Although federal funding is provided to CADTH, it operates as an independent body and its Common Drug Review (CDR) assesses the clinical and cost-effectiveness of drugs and issues formulary listing recommendations to participating public drug plans. CADTH's CDR assessed the clinical and cost-effectiveness of Spinraza for patients with SMA and issued a formulary listing recommendation for public drug plans to reimburse the drug for a subset of patients with one type of SMA.

On June 22, 2018, CADTH indicated that Spinraza would be eligible for a CDR resubmission. Once a review of the resubmission has been completed, the CDR will issue an updated listing recommendation.

The Government of Canada, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), also continues to invest in research on SMA to better understand the disease and develop novel therapeutic approaches. In February 2018, CIHR announced an investment of \$937,000 to Dr. Jocelyn Côté from the University of Ottawa to test the potential of novel therapies for SMA.

The Government of Canada will continue to work with provincial and territorial governments and other key partners to provide Canadians with affordable access to the prescription drugs that they need.