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November 9, 2020

Honourable Cameron Friesen
Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living

Dear Minister,

The Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals (MAHCP) is proud to represent over 6,500 Allied Health Professionals working across the province to support Manitobans through this pandemic. Our members are risking their safety and that of their families to make sure Manitobans continue to get the care they need. They deserve more than investigations from your government. They need more support, more front-line staffing and better protections to keep them safe.

Our members are growing increasingly alarmed, an understandable response when everything seems to be pointing to an out-of-control situation. They are seeing a constant stream of bad news regarding hospital and care home outbreaks, a growing number of deaths and, today, the tragic death of one of their own, a health care worker at Victoria General Hospital related to that outbreak. All of this news confirms their experience on the ground in Manitoba health care, an experience increasingly characterized by understaffing, mandated overtime, PPE that isn't keeping them safe, and an Employer that is scrambling to meet the challenges of the moment when lessons from other jurisdictions should have been learned and incorporated long ago.

I implore you to take action today to provide additional supports, increased staffing and appropriate PPE to keep our members safe so they can have the confidence they need to continue supporting Manitobans through this crisis. It is a legal and moral obligation to keep our members safe on the job, but it is also a matter of pressing practical importance. As you know, the system will grind to a halt without Allied Health Professionals showing up healthy and confident to do their all-important jobs in laboratories, ambulances, ICUs, ERs, diagnostic imaging, community clinics and every other health care setting across the province. You can't rewind the clock, but you can take concrete and necessary steps today.

MAHCP has been calling for these measures for months. You have heard public calls as well in recent days from doctors, nurses and other health care workers, and unions that represent them. All of these voices are calling for you to take immediate action. You can demonstrate your commitment to supporting Allied Health Professionals by announcing new supports, increased staffing levels and improved access to life-saving PPE, such as N95 respirators, today. You can't delay a moment longer.

Sincerely,

Bob Moroz, MAHCP President

CC: Wab Kinew, Leader of the Official Opposition; Dougald Lamont, Manitoba Liberal Leader