

September 23, 2019

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P., Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada  
Hon. Andrew Scheer, P.C., M.P., Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada  
Jagmeet Singh, M.P., Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada  
Yves-François Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois  
Elizabeth May, M.P., Leader of the Green Party of Canada

Dear Sirs and Madam,

As we head to the polls on October 21, Action Hepatitis Canada and its 62 member organizations are eager to hear from each of you on an issue that is important to us: Canada's World Health Organization (WHO) commitment to end viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a serious and life-threatening virus that attacks the liver and can cause fibrosis, decompensated cirrhosis, liver cancer and death. It is estimated that over 250,000 Canadians are living with HCV, with thousands of new infections occurring every year.

Since 2014, we have a cure in the form of one pill a day for 8-12 weeks with virtually no side effects, but health policy has not kept up with science. The policies around testing and treatment, and the evidence-based practices that can prevent people from becoming infected in the first place, are inadequate and in some cases are actually working against our elimination efforts.

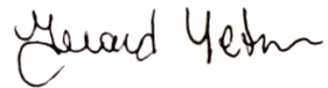
In 2016, Canada committed on the world stage to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030, but a recent study indicates we are desperately lagging in terms of progress. If things continue as they are, we will not reach our goal until 2050 or later. CanHepC released a *Blueprint to Inform HCV Elimination Efforts in Canada* this year, giving us the policy recommendations that could get us on track, yet the new *Government of Canada Five-Year Action Plan on Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections* includes zero targets, no concrete actions, and no real accountability.

Our country needs real federal leadership if we are to eliminate HCV in Canada. Therefore, in advance of the upcoming election, we would appreciate your response to the following question:

**If elected, will your government uphold Canada's WHO commitment to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030? How will you strengthen the STBBI Action Plan to accomplish this, and what accountabilities will you put in place?**

We thank you in advance for your response. If received by October 14, we will make your response available to our Canada-wide membership before Canadians head to the polls.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerard Yetman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gerard Yetman  
Chair, Action Hepatitis Canada