

# The Last Word – Healthy Canadians

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Canadians demand a health care system which is compassionate and responsive to their needs. Our Government agrees: protecting and promoting the health and safety of Canadians is one of the highest priorities of any government.

Although healthcare delivery is an area of Provincial responsibility, the Federal Government remains concerned about the overall health and welfare of Canadians. We have proposed amendments to the *Tobacco Act* to protect children and youth from tobacco advertising. One such victim from our own community was a 14 year old girl, who was attracted by the sleek look and colourful packaging on bubble gum-flavoured cigarillos. Before she knew it, she became addicted to the nicotine in these tobacco products that seem to be marketed directly at young children. To stop such victimization, we have banned sales of cigarillos in packages of fewer than 20. Companies must submit every ingredient in these products to the Minister of Health, who can proceed to judge whether or not these products are safe for Canadians. As well, further restraints are made on the types of marketing campaigns that tobacco companies can engage in. These moves will further ensure the safety of our children.

The Federal Government has also introduced the *Canada Consumer Product Safety Act*. This will allow the Government to work with the private sector to identify safety risks and prohibit the manufacture, importation, or advertisement of consumer products that are a danger to human health or safety.

In addition to cracking down on companies that would behave irresponsibly regarding the health of Canadians, we are committed to helping Canadians become more aware of their own health. We have also launched a three-year public education campaign on immunization that offers parents easily accessible information to help them make informed decisions about their children's health. We have fulfilled our promise to bring down wait times, encouraging Canadians to seek preventive care from their doctor. Our Government also introduced the MedEffect Canada social marketing campaign to encourage consumers and health-care professionals to report suspected side effects from health products and keep up-to-date on important safety data.

In addition, we have announced funding of \$10 million over three years to support lung health initiatives that will help Canadians prevent, detect and manage respiratory diseases. We announced \$15 million over four years to support Canada's first national population study on neurological diseases. Both these announcements deliver on commitments made in the 2008 Speech from the Throne.

The Government of Canada is delivering results for all Canadians while respecting the individual needs and concerns of every Canadian. Our Government will continue to act to protect the health of all Canadians.

I would like to hear your thoughts on these initiatives. Please contact me by email at [rathgb1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:rathgb1@parl.gc.ca) or by phone at 780-459-0809.