

# Canadian Action Plan for Brain Health



**NHCC**

NEUROLOGICAL HEALTH  
CHARITIES CANADA

# Our solution

NHCC urges the Government of Canada to commit to developing a **Canadian Action Plan for Brain Health** to improve the lives of the four million Canadians living with brain conditions and their families through **increased brain health research and meaningful care and supports.**

*If dementia doubles in 20 years as has been predicted, we need to know where people are going to go, and what each one costs in terms of resources... rehabilitation and quality of life.*

~ Individual living with a brain condition



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# Who We Are

A coalition of health charities, NHCC is the voice of Canadians affected by brain conditions. We work together to:

**Improve the lives of people affected by  
brain diseases, disorders and injuries  
in Canada**



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# The background

Our recommendations directly build on the ground-breaking National Population Health Study of Neurological Conditions and the final report:

## ***Mapping Connections:***

*An understanding of neurological conditions in Canada*

The Study was:

- Most comprehensive study of brain conditions in Canada
- New Canadian information on 18 brain conditions



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# Why we need an Action Plan

- ✧ We now have an understanding of **scope, breadth, impact and cost** of brain conditions in Canada and what needs to be done.
- ✧ **Unemployment** among Canadians with brain condition is 12 times higher than general population
- ✧ **Half** of home care or LTC clients have a brain condition
- ✧ **40% of children** with brain conditions have limited educational opportunities

*Money for food, rent, or prescriptions should not be a decision faced by people with disabilities on a regular basis.*

*~ Individual living with a brain condition*

# The Action Plan - 1

- ✧ Build on *Mapping Connections* to tackle important identified **research gaps**:
  - ✧ R-2: **Target knowledge deficits** in data & epidemiological research re ALS, dystonia, Huntington's disease, muscular dystrophy, spinal cord injury & traumatic brain injury.
  - ✧ R-3: Study the impact of brain conditions on **First Nations, Inuit and Métis populations.**
  - ✧ R-4: Examine how **having both neurological and mental health conditions** negatively impact accessing health services and develop strategies to overcome this serious problem.

*You have to take on so many roles: be a medical expert, put on makeup, style hair, be both hands on and philosophical.”*

~ Caregiver

# The Action Plan - 2

- ✧ R-5: Increase federal funding of **investigator-led research** with an emphasis on fundamental brain health research.
- ✧ R-6: Test a **better model of integrated care** for brain conditions in carefully selected demonstration projects as recommended by Mapping Connections Project.
- ✧ R-7: Take immediate action to improve the lives of all Canadians affected by brain conditions and others on the following **policy changes**.

*Parents of children with neurological conditions repeatedly noted that they had to call in to work to say they were either going to be late or they were unable to report that day. The lack of predictability around their children's needs added to the need for flexibility.*

~ Study researcher

# The Action Plan - 3

- ✧ R-7 details: Policy changes to benefit Canadians affected by brain conditions, other conditions & disabilities. NHCC supports these recommendations by other coalitions/ organizations:
  - ✧ Look at ways to immediately **increase income security** through changes to CPP-D, EI sickness benefits, disability tax credits.
  - ✧ Assure any future **Canadian Disability Act** protects the rights of Canadians with brain conditions.
  - ✧ Consider **guaranteed annual income** or a **national disability insurance** program.
  - ✧ Support caregivers by making **caregiver tax credits refundable** and **increasing the value of caregiver benefits**.
  - ✧ Partner with the provinces & territories to develop a **national pharmacare program** that is accessible to all Canadians.
  - ✧ Ensure any future **national dementia strategy** involves and protects all Canadians living with dementia.



# Estimated cost

Recommendation	Cost
1 – Develop Canadian Action Plan for Brain Health	\$5 million over two years
2-4 – Fund research into knowledge gaps identified by population health study	\$40 million over five years
5 – Increase funding of independent investigator-led health research	Not costed since this has been addressed by Canada’s Fundamental Science Review
6 - Test proposed Chronic Care Model for Neurological Conditions in demonstration projects	\$10 million over two years
7 – Take action on policy changes to improve lives of people affected by brain conditions right now	Not costed since these solutions have been addressed by other organizations
<b>Total of recommendations 1–4 and 6</b>	<b>\$55 million over two to five years</b>

# Our role

NHCC is ready to be a **catalyst, convenor and collaborator** to assist the Government of Canada in developing a Canadian Action Plan for Brain Health.

*Families often know more about neurological conditions than health professionals... This is an added burden for families and patients.*

~ Individual living with a brain condition

Neurological Health Charities Canada is eager to work with you to make life better for people with brain conditions and their families.

Thank you



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