



Registered Massage Therapists'
Association of Ontario

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March 17, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Langevin Block
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

The Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (RMTAO) is appreciative of the efforts the Government of Canada announced today to mitigate the devastating economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on small businesses and self-employed individuals. The RMTAO represents 14,000 Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) across Ontario, the overwhelming majority of whom are self-employed. We also recognize and support the many thousands of self-employed RMTs Canada-wide who are represented by our counterparts in each province.

The RMTAO supports the containment measures that have been put in place to stop the spread of COVID-19, and recognizes that they are an essential step to ensuring public health. Unfortunately, these measures are also resulting in extreme financial hardship for our self-employed members, many of whom do not have access to Employment Insurance.

The RMTAO appreciates the initiatives that have already been announced by the Prime Minister to mitigate the economic impact of this crisis on self-employed workers and small businesses, such as increased access to credit and support with vital expenses such as mortgage payments. The RMTAO strongly encourages the Prime Minister to announce further, targeted initiatives that will assist RMTs and all self-employed individuals and small business owners with their ability to feed their families, pay their rent or mortgages and pay their taxes.

RMTs play a vital role in providing health services to Canadians. They assist with rehabilitation, improve the quality of life of the elderly and alleviate the physical symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety. RMTs help people relieve their musculoskeletal pain so they can remain at work longer and continue to enjoy the activities that they love. Massage therapy has also been recognized as a potential non-drug alternative to opioids in the treatment of chronic pain. While many of these essential services will have to be suspended during this pandemic, any financial support you can offer RMTs will ensure that these services resume as quickly and effectively as possible once the worst of this situation has passed.

The RMTAO would appreciate receiving information from the Prime Minister that we can share with our members that will assist in helping them cope financially with this unprecedented crisis. We are also interested in providing further input or otherwise assisting in the Government's efforts in

responding to the crisis, especially measures that affect RMTs and their patients. We are similarly interested in measures that affect all self-employed individuals and small business owners.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Feraday". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Michael Feraday
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario

CC: Andrew Sheer, Leader of the Official Opposition
Jagmeet Singh, Leader, New Democratic Party
Jo-Ann Roberts, Interim Leader, Green Party of Ontario
Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
Hon. Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance