

April 6th, 2020

The Honourable Bill Morneau, MP
Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Sent by email to: Bill.Morneau@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister Morneau,

I first want to acknowledge the great work being done at the Department of Finance in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

At Dietitians of Canada, we represent dietitians across the country and many of them are on the front lines ensuring patients receive appropriate nutritional care and safe foods, whether in long-term care homes, in hospitals or as part of home care programs. A subset of our members works in private practice, either within a company or as self-employed professionals. As essential health care workers, these professionals continue to provide services, mostly virtual, to the most vulnerable, including clients recovering from surgeries or clients with eating disorders, which while alleviating pressure on hospital emergency rooms, are not numerous in nature.

The **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)** is a great initiative. However, the fact that workers need to have had no revenues in the last 14 days to benefit from it is a major issue. In fact, as mentioned above, many dietitians still provide essential services to vulnerable clients, even though they lost most of their revenues. And in some provinces, regulatory bodies are asking their members to continue to provide essential services virtually, making them liable if they stop providing care to receive the CERB. Thus, we have recommendations regarding the CERB that would not only benefit dietitians and other healthcare professionals, but that could also reduce the financial burden for the government and make sure essential services are provided to Canadians:

1. Make the CERB available to all self-employed health professionals, even if they still receive a small revenue, and provide them with the difference in revenues up to \$2000/month;
2. Make the CERB available to support staff that work to support essential healthcare professionals (administrative assistants, HR staff, etc.);

On behalf of dietitians that own or work within an incorporated company, we want to thank you for implementing the **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy** which we help provide some relief to them. As for dietitians who own unincorporated businesses, we encourage you to make it also available to them to help them continue to provide services to the vulnerable population.

We remain available to discuss this matter further and we want to thank you again for accommodating our healthcare professionals that work hard to keep the population safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



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