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The Hon./L'hon.
Hon. Stanley Kutcher, *MD, FRCPC*
Senator – Nova Scotia
Sénateur – Nouvelle-Écosse

February 25, 2025

Dear fellow Canadians,

The complex medical disorder, Long Covid is increasingly becoming better known as a spectrum of symptoms, many of which are associated with functional impairment, onsetting after an individual has contacted a SARS-Cov-2 infection. It is estimated to affect many millions of persons worldwide and has been demonstrated to have a negative impact on the economic productivity and interpersonal relationships of persons affected. Currently, the pathoetiology of this disorder is not yet clear. Indeed, it seems to demonstrate pathologies that cut across previously established medical categories and may involve direct end organ damage by the virus, neurological dysfunction, reactivation of previously acquired but latent viruses and disturbed autoimmune responses.

Official figures for 2023 estimate that about 3.5 million adult Canadians have suffered from Long Covid, with 2.1 million (58%) still suffering. Of this number, 600,000 adults have missed time from work or school because of symptoms, with about 100,000 unable to return to work or school due to impairment. Two-thirds of those who sought healthcare services for their symptoms reported not receiving necessary care (<https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/post-covid-condition/>). There are no official statistics for children and youth, but are also greatly affected.

Unfortunately, the Canadian response to better understanding the causes of, and treatments for, Long Covid has not been as robust as it should have been. While the Post Covid-19 Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network has been established and is doing good work, calls for more funding for research have not resulted in hoped for investments. Additionally, there exists a need for better education of the public and health care providers as to the symptomatic presentation, impact and potentially effective interventions for Long Covid. Providing additional funding for Long Covid support groups is an especially pressing need. Furthermore, more needs to be done to enhance clinical care and the sharing of best practices amongst health care professionals who provide care to Long Covid patients.

I urge both the federal government and the provincial/territorial governments to do more to establish a common approach to the issues related to Long Covid and to bring their health policy and health funding capabilities to the table to deal with this chronic yet poorly understood condition.

Sincerely,

Hon. Dr. Stanley Kutcher
Independent Senator for Nova Scotia
Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University