



## The voice for Canadians who care about cancer

### Highlights of our advocacy work in 2021

**Changing public policy is one of the most effective tools for preventing cancer and helping those living with and beyond cancer.** That's why the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) works with government to bring about healthy public policies that will help prevent cancer and improve the lives of people living with cancer and their caregivers. Thanks to your support, our advocacy work is making a difference. Here are some recent advocacy achievements that demonstrate our dedication to preventing cancer and finding new and better ways to make life easier for Canadians with cancer.

### Success in numbers

In 2021, we:

- Drove **51 policy wins** throughout Canada
- Engaged over **480 policy influencers**
- Engaged over **300 Canadians** to support advocacy by receiving updates on our work, sharing their story, writing their elected official and being a voice for change
- Impacted at least **9,218,000 Canadians** through our advocacy

### Our top 10 successes

#### Cancer & COVID-19: making the voices of people affected by cancer heard

From the start of the pandemic, CCS has heard from people with cancer whose surgeries have been postponed, treatment plans changed and tests delayed, who are worried about being forgotten. As the voice for people who care about cancer, we continue to advocate to all levels of government, urging them to consider evidence on the impact of postponed surgeries, paused screening programs and overall reductions in cancer care when making decisions that could impact cancer care. We advocated that people with cancer and survivors be prioritized for first, second and third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, and called for mandatory vaccination of healthcare workers.

#### Influencing policy makers

Our advocacy team worked tirelessly throughout 2021 to bring cancer issues directly to the policy makers and elected officials who can enact change. As a result, the Canadian Cancer Society was named one of the most active lobbyists of 2021. This ranking includes all lobby activities at the federal level and puts us alongside some of the largest corporations in Canada. CCS was also ranked as the 13<sup>th</sup> most active health lobbyist in 2021.



### **Advocating for better palliative care**

CCS has long advocated for better access to affordable, culturally safe, high-quality palliative care regardless of where someone lives or chooses to receive care. To build upon our success, and with generous funding from the Don and Shirley Green Family Charitable Foundation, we launched a new advocacy team dedicated to transforming hospice palliative care across Canada. The team is championing solutions that improve access, awareness and quality of palliative care across the country so people with cancer can get help controlling symptoms, minimizing pain and feeling a sense of comfort and choice at the end of life. Our work has already shown results: in Budget 2021, the federal government committed \$30 million over 6 years towards palliative care after calls from CCS in the pre-budget consultation process.

### **Protecting youth from vaping**

Thanks to your support, our advocacy work is helping to protect youth in Canada from the harms of vaping. In 2021, the federal government adopted a regulation to set a maximum nicotine level in e-cigarettes, and announced a draft regulation to restrict most flavours in e-cigarettes. Saskatchewan restricted the sale of most flavoured e-cigarettes to adult-only specialty stores. New Brunswick implemented a ban on flavoured e-cigarettes. The federal budget included a proposed e-cigarette tax, a measure also included in the Liberal and NDP 2021 election platforms, while Saskatchewan implemented an e-cigarette tax. These changes will help reduce e-cigarette use among youth by making it harder for them to purchase it, less appealing and more expensive.

In March 2021, CCS appeared as an intervener before the Quebec Court of Appeal to argue in favour of the constitutional validity of Quebec provincial legislation that significantly restricts e-cigarette advertising. CCS had intervener status despite the strong objections of the Canadian Vaping Association and the Quebec Association of Vape Stores. Ultimately, on November 15, 2021, the Court ruled unanimously that the legislation was valid in its entirety. The judgment has national implications and will be beneficial in support of e-cigarette legislation both federally and in other provinces.

### **Giving you more ways to get involved**

We can't do what we do without you. Your voice is powerful and has the ability to make governments act. That's why we launched a new e-advocacy tool dedicated to mobilizing the public around important cancer issues, bringing their voice forward to elected officials who are in a position to enact change. To take part in future campaigns, sign up to be a part of [Voices for Change](#) – our volunteer network for individuals passionate about changing the future of cancer through advocacy.

### **Leading the charge this World Cancer Day**

On World Cancer Day 2021, we made sure the needs of Canadians affected by cancer were top of mind for politicians. We reached out to elected officials across the country, letting them know the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on people affected by cancer.



This outreach resulted in meetings with many Ministers of Health, Members of Parliament and provincial elected officials, which allowed us to continue bringing forward the cancer issues that matter most. We asked elected officials to share our message on social media which resulted in numerous posts of support from all levels of government, including from the Prime Minister and federal Minister of Health, that reached an audience of over 12 million.

### **Making cancer a priority during the 2021 federal election**

During the 2021 federal election, we took a stand on important cancer issues and made sure that the needs of people with cancer were seen as a priority for all political parties. Our advocacy had an impact, and we saw our priorities reflected in each party's platform. The Liberal Party, who were re-elected, committed to addressing disruptions to health care, strengthening policies to support healthy living and implementing a tobacco manufacturer cost recovery fee as well as a tax on e-cigarettes. Each of these promises will have a positive impact on cancer care and prevention. Thanks to your support, we will make sure they follow through on their promises.

### **Extending the EI sickness benefit**

Budget 2021 included an extension to the EI sickness benefit. For the hundreds of thousands of people living with cancer in Canada, financial burden and illness are a day-to-day reality. The new investment will ensure they have more paid time off work to recover from their treatment – and ensure no one is forced to choose between a paycheque and cancer treatment. This commitment is a major achievement for CCS after years of advocacy work on this important issue.

### **Achieving progress in tobacco control**

Tobacco remains the leading preventable cause of cancer and is responsible for about 30% of all cancer deaths. In 2021, there was significant progress towards requiring tobacco companies to reimburse the federal government for the annual cost of its tobacco control strategy and helping to hold tobacco companies responsible. The measure – a tobacco manufacturer cost recovery fee – was included in the Liberal, Conservative and NDP 2021 election platforms. In Nunavut, significant legislation was adopted that included nationally precedent setting restrictions on tobacco manufacturer promotions directed at retailers. CCS also advocated for higher tobacco taxes and, despite tobacco industry opposition, saw increases in 2021 implemented by the federal government, British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Yukon.

### **Protecting our beloved programs for people living with cancer**

In 2021, we worked with the Nova Scotia government to secure operational funding for our Lodge that Gives to continue offering a home-away-from home. Located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, The Lodge that Gives provides accommodation to people traveling into the city for cancer treatment. The Nova Scotia government provided CCS with \$225K in operational funding and entered into a financial agreement with CCS to support Lodge operations moving forward. We also successfully advocated for \$1.7 million in funding from the Ontario



Canadian  
Cancer  
Society

Government for our Wheels of Hope program after hosting a Lobby Day at Queen's Park, sending over 100 letters from Wheels of Hope drivers to ministers' officers and local Members of Provincial Parliament, and empowering volunteer drivers to meet with politicians directly to advocate for the program.

## **Be a voice for change**

Are you interested in being involved in future advocacy activities? Sign up for [CCS Voices for Change](#) and use your voice to make a difference.