



Open Letter to Canada's Federal and Provincial Governments

From the Canadian Nuclear Isotope Council
and the Co-Chairs of the Oncologist and Clinical
Scientist Network

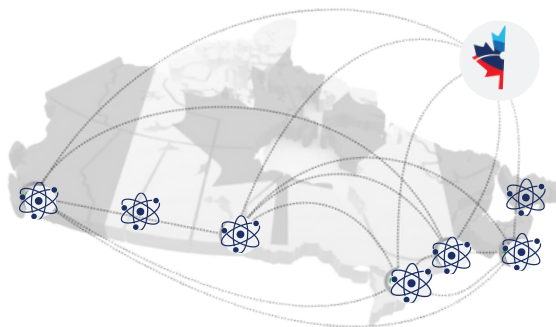
November 21st, 2025
Toronto, Ontario

Dear federal and provincial elected officials,

For over half a century, Canada has been a world leader in the production, development, and application of life-saving medical isotopes. Canada's leadership in this field has transformed modern health care globally in many profound ways, including the sterilization of medical equipment and the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Patients in Canada and around the world are relying on Canada now more than ever. In response, the Canadian Nuclear Isotope Council (CNIC) launched the *Isotopes for Hope* campaign to highlight the critical importance of sustaining Canada's leadership in this field.

As clinical leaders, oncologists, and nuclear medicine professionals at some of Canada's foremost cancer centres, we are proud to support CNIC's *Isotopes for Hope* campaign through our participation in the CNIC's Oncologist and Clinician Scientist Network. This national initiative brings together leading experts and specialists to advance awareness, access and advocacy for medical isotopes within the healthcare community. We write today to express our unequivocal support for this vision of Canadian global leadership and the need to safeguard, strengthen, and expand Canada's leadership in medical isotopes.

In our collective capacity, we care for thousands of cancer patients annually, helping children, adults, and families to navigate the most challenging moments of their lives. The precision, efficacy, and compassion with which we are able to deliver care is deeply intertwined with the availability and advancement of medical isotopes. These isotopes are foundational to contemporary cancer care, enabling high-resolution diagnostics, real-time treatment planning, and increasingly, the delivery of targeted radiotherapies that minimize harm to healthy cells while improving patient outcomes.



Canada has a long and proud history of leadership and innovation in this field, from pioneering the first use of cobalt-60 (Co-60) in cancer treatment in London, Ontario, in 1951 to becoming one of the world's largest producers of several medical isotopes used in sterilization, diagnostics and treatment. However, with the global nuclear medicine market projected to reach up to USD 42 billion by 2033 and therapeutic applications being projected to represent 75 per cent of this growth, maintaining Canada's leadership and isotope excellence is critical to ensuring patients in Canada and around the world continue to have access to life-saving cancer treatments (MEDraysintell, 2024). Through the *Isotopes for Hope* campaign, we are proud to support the International Atomic Energy Agency's Rays for Hope initiative, which is dedicated to expanding access to lifesaving cancer care and medical isotopes in low- and middle-income countries.

Together, with the CNIC, we are rising to the challenge to reduce barriers for patients, support further innovation in healthcare, and reinforce Canada's role as a leader in the global fight against cancer. The CNIC serves not only as an advocacy platform, but as a systems integrator which brings together key stakeholders from across the isotope value chain: federal and provincial governments, reactor operators, supply chain experts, radiopharmaceutical companies, academic researchers, and, crucially, front-line clinicians. This ensures that policymaking is informed by both technical rigour and clinical realities, and that technical innovations are aligned with the evolving needs of Canadian patients and providers. To support this vision and mission, we have identified the following opportunities for governments to support the expansion of Canada's leadership in the field:

- Develop a cross-departmental National Isotope Strategy that recognizes medical isotopes as a strategic health and economic advantage, supported by a multi-disciplinary National Isotope Advisory Council of clinicians, academics and industry experts to advise on future government action and policy direction.
- Advance the research, development, and clinical innovation by supporting investigator- and industry-initiated trials, develop commercial pathways for isotope innovation, and expand and leverage isotope infrastructure nationwide to its full capacity to ensure a resilient supply chain.
- Expedite patient access to medical isotope treatments and diagnostics by leveraging lessons learned from previous reimbursement decisions to refine, streamline, and accelerate the public funding pathways for new radiopharmaceutical drugs and devices.
- Secure and expand Canadian talent and expertise, particularly high-demand roles such as radiochemists, nuclear medicine technologist and medical radiation technologists, facilitate cross discipline training, by partnering with leading academic centres to expand specialized programs, enabling cross discipline collaborations, create more hands-on training, and offer targeted incentives to attract highly promising individuals into these specialties from adjacent programs.

From our vantage point as clinicians, the value of a strong Canadian future in medical isotopes is deeply personal and profoundly important. We rely on isotopes not as an abstract scientific tool, but as a core enabler of evidence-based, compassionate cancer care. Isotopes are the necessary fuel for a positron emission tomography (PET) or a single-photon emission computerized tomography (SPECT) scan that detects metastases early, a radiopharmaceutical therapy that extends a patient's life by months or even years, or a tracer that determines whether a child's tumor is responding to treatment. These are daily realities made possible through a secure and responsive isotope supply chain.

Nuclear medicine will continue to be a lifeline for thousands of Canadian cancer patients. With the right policy direction and partnerships across governments, departments, and ministries, the future of cancer care in Canada will be bright.

Sincerely,

The Canadian Nuclear Isotope Council's Oncologist and Clinical Scientist Network Co-Chairs



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