

Dear [NAME OF CANDIDATE],

As a resident of [INSERT RIDING], I am writing to you today to highlight the need to make the communication health of Canadians a priority in the 2015 federal election.

In particular, I am concerned about **the lack of necessary health-care services currently available to our nation's seniors, including those that address communication health.**

Did you know that 78% of stroke patients will have a swallowing disorder, or that individuals with hearing loss are 2 to 5 times more likely to develop dementia?

Speech, language, swallowing, hearing and balance disorders can have a significant impact on seniors' physical, emotional, social and financial well-being. The earlier that a disorder is identified and treated, the better a person's chances are for improvement or even recovery.

In Canada, however, preventative services are often offered too late, creating further strain on an already overloaded health-care system. These problems will only worsen as our population of seniors continues to grow.

In order for Canada's health-care system to be sustainable, the federal and provincial governments must come together to establish a strategy that will keep Canada's seniors healthy and independent for as long as possible. It is my opinion that **the federal government must take a leadership role in establishing a national seniors strategy.** To ensure optimal communication health, this strategy must include better access to long-term care and improved home care services.

My concerns regarding this issue are fully supported by Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC) and its more than 6,000 members and associates from across the country. SAC is the only national organization supporting and representing speech-language pathologists, audiologists and communication health assistants inclusively. The association works tirelessly to advocate for the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology and to champion the needs of people with communication disorders.

As part of the Alliance for a National Seniors Strategy ([www.demandaplan.ca](http://www.demandaplan.ca)), SAC is calling for a national plan to address the increasing health-care needs of Canada's growing senior population. Speech-language pathologists and audiologists have long been providing essential assessment and treatment services that preserve independence, ensure safety and improve quality of life for seniors.

I trust that, upon reading this letter, you will give this issue the attention it deserves and consider making it a focus of your campaign moving forward.

Signed,

[INSERT NAME]

*For more information regarding SAC, please visit [www.sac-oac.ca](http://www.sac-oac.ca). You can also join the discussion online and share where YOU stand on the importance of communication health by using the #CommunicationHealth hashtag and following [@SAC OAC](https://twitter.com/SAC_OAC) on Twitter.*