

Dear [insert MP name]:

It has been gratifying to see your government commit to funding and supporting mental health.

Access is grounded in equity – no service or mental health professional should be beyond the reach of a person needing care simply due to finances. Despite equity being a central principle of our Medicare system, an inequality continues to exist.

Those who require access to psychotherapy often turn to the professionals specially trained to provide it – psychotherapists. There are tens of thousands of psychotherapists across Canada, helping people recover from addictions, cope with depression, address anxiety and live with the impact of trauma. Along with psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers, psychotherapists are an essential part of the mental health provider landscape.

Yet, despite performing an essential service in exactly the same manner as, for example, psychologists or social workers, psychotherapists are the only group of regulated mental health professionals subject to the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST). I am sure you will agree that demanding a client pay a 13 per cent surcharge for needed mental health care merely because of the type of professional who provides the service is both unfair and unbalanced. It is poor public policy and it creates a significant barrier to access.

I know that the Trudeau government is committed to creating a fairer society and aiding the mental health of all of its citizens by improving access to care. That is why I am encouraging you to take a simple step that will serve as highly visible and public proof of your commitments.

You have the power, with the stroke of a pen, to change this arbitrary and inequitable tax treatment and make psychotherapy more widely available for those who need it. Please use this power to strike down this barrier to care.

Thank you for your support on this important matter and I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further on this issue.

Yours truly,

{Your name}