



August 28th, 2020

Minister Cameron Friesen
Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Friesen,

I am writing to share the concerns of Infection Prevention and Control Professionals (ICPs) regarding pandemic pay in Manitoba.

It has been brought to our attention that ICPs have been ignored in the assessment to provide increased compensation to front line workers fighting the spread of COVID-19. Infection Prevention and Control Canada (IPAC Canada) wishes to use this oversight as an opportunity to provide more background about the essential contributions made by our profession.

Thousands of ICPs across Canada have played a vital role in limiting the spread of COVID-19 within healthcare facilities and in other settings. They felt the added pressure of the pandemic as much as any other profession, and many worked in settings where they were at increased risk of contracting COVID-19. At the same time, they continued their ongoing daily work of monitoring trends in communicable illness, and trained and informed healthcare workers and administrators in critical response measures. Perhaps most importantly, they continued to liaise with public health authorities who were advising political leaders like yourself, and the public at large, to make informed and responsible decisions.

In some provinces, ICPs were included in measures to provide pandemic pay, but, in most cases, only if they were nurses. This leaves out the ICPs with other backgrounds, for instance, epidemiology, Medical Laboratory Technologists, and public health. Manitoba has implemented a risk pay program based on an income threshold. This program is administered directly by the government for ICPs working in Manitoba.

While the majority of IPAC Canada members work in acute care settings, there are a wide range of settings where their expertise is needed to prevent or control the spread of illness. Some of these include Community Health, Long Term Care, and Public Health. It is very concerning that the contributions of these essential workers, many of whom put themselves at risk during the pandemic, did not have their contributions recognized.

I invite you to work with departmental officials to learn more about the contributions of our profession by reviewing the [role of an ICP](#) on our website.

We know that decisions regarding pandemic response were made quickly. On behalf of all ICPs across Canada I would like to invite you and your staff to meet with IPAC Canada and members of our local chapter. At this meeting we propose to discuss how the pandemic has affected our profession and what steps can be taken in the future to be best prepared to address a similar situation.

Sincerely,

(Ms.) Gerry Hansen BA
Executive Director
IPAC Canada