

# MEDIA RELEASE

## COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESS

### **Physiotherapists have a critical role to play in easing acute-care hospital bed backlogs!**

**HALIFAX: December 21, 2005** – While applauding yesterday’s announcement by Nova Scotia Health Minister Angus MacIsaac that more long term care beds are coming, it’s important to remember that beds are only part of the solution when fixing emergency room overcrowding, says the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA).

‘Physiotherapists play a vital role in addressing this critical issue, says Tanya Nichol, President of the Nova Scotia Branch of the CPA. “It’s important that the Health Minister take that into consideration when developing strategies to address the emergency room overcrowding.”

“One of the best ways to keep the citizens of Nova Scotia out of acute care beds is to appropriately manage home care and rehabilitation services, such that it will allow more Nova Scotians to go home safely and continue to have their health needs met. Home care physiotherapy is the appropriate service to assist in this situation. ,” Nichol explains.

Studies show that physiotherapy:

- is more cost-effective in the community as compared to hospital-based services (Cott et al, 2004; Parroy, 2005);
- diminishes costs and increases the time that family physicians have available for patient consultation (Holdsworth, 2001);
- decreases patient wait times within a primary health care setting (Cott et al, 2004);
- results in fewer referrals to medical specialists (Hendriks, 2003); and,
- has a positive effect on the functional status and cost of care of long-term care residents. (Przybylski et al, 1996).

The Canadian Physiotherapy Association is the voluntary organization representing more than 9,500 members and students across the country. CPA's mission is to provide leadership and direction to the physiotherapy profession, foster excellence in practice, education and research and promote high standards of health in Canada.