



# Canada

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Amplify Impact: Patient Organisation Sustainability  
& Health Equity

07

## Canada country audit

### Audit parameters

| Field                  | Canada audit specification                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jurisdiction           | Canada                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Primary unit           | Federal government support framework                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Subnational treatment  | Targeted scan of provincial and territorial mechanisms, with Ontario used as an illustrative provincial case                                                                                                                   |
| Organisations in scope | Registered health charities, nonprofit organisations, community health providers, patient organisations, Indigenous organisations, disability organisations, public-health organisations and community-based service providers |
| Evidence standard      | Publicly accessible and independently verifiable sources                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Scoring basis          | Desk evidence only; scores assess the documented framework rather than every organisation's experience                                                                                                                         |
| Federalism note        | Provinces and territories are primarily responsible for organising and delivering healthcare, while the federal government uses grants, contributions, transfers, tax policy and targeted health programs                      |

### Overall finding

Canada has a substantial, transparent and relatively structured government-support framework, but support is divided across federal departments, provinces, territories, regional health systems and tax authorities.

Health charities and NGOs can receive support through:

- federal grants and contributions;
- provincial grants and transfer-payment agreements;
- commissioned health and social services;
- Indigenous health and community funding;
- mental-health, substance-use and public-health programs;
- research and partnership grants;
- emergency funding;
- federal and provincial tax incentives for donors;
- income-tax exemption for registered charities;
- GST/HST rebates;
- national grant and contract disclosure;
- risk-based transfer-payment administration; and
- procurement and applicant-assistance systems.

The federal government maintains a central grants and funding finder, while Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada publish health-specific funding opportunities. Federal grants and contributions awards are searchable through the Open Government Portal, and federal contracts over CAD\$10,000 are separately disclosed.

Canada's framework is strongest in:

- public disclosure of grants and contracts;
- donor tax incentives;
- GST/HST relief;
- formal risk-based transfer-payment rules;
- health-specific payment service standards;
- targeted Indigenous and equity-oriented funding; and
- extensive provincial and community-sector participation in health delivery.

Its main weaknesses are:

- fragmented federal and provincial access points;
- limited broadly available unrestricted funding;
- inconsistent treatment of indirect costs;
- complex charity and funding compliance;
- varying provincial commissioning arrangements;
- limited nationwide evidence on funding renewal and indexation;
- potentially long and resource-intensive application processes; and
- incomplete system-wide integration of community organisations into health-data and referral infrastructure.

## Instrument matrix

### A. Direct financial support

| Code     | Instrument                                              | Level                        | Description and health-sector relevance                                                                                                                                              | Evidence assessment                                     |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| DF-CA-01 | Health Canada grants and contributions                  | Federal                      | Health Canada funds projects intended to maintain and improve the health system, including health policy, substance use, official-language health services and other priority areas. | Strong national evidence.                               |
| DF-CA-02 | Public Health Agency of Canada grants and contributions | Federal                      | PHAC publishes grant and contribution opportunities for public-health promotion, prevention, mental health, chronic disease, infectious disease and population-health initiatives.   | Strong health-specific funding infrastructure.          |
| DF-CA-03 | Health Care Policy and Strategies Program               | Federal                      | Provides contribution funding for policy, innovation and strategic health-system initiatives involving governments, institutions and eligible organisations.                         | Strong program evidence; funding is purpose-restricted. |
| DF-CA-04 | Official Languages Health Program                       | Federal                      | Funds organisations and initiatives intended to improve health access for official-language minority communities.                                                                    | Strong equity-oriented program evidence.                |
| DF-CA-05 | Substance Use and Addictions Program                    | Federal                      | Funds community-led and evidence-informed initiatives addressing substance use, harm reduction, treatment and related public-health priorities.                                      | Strong and significant current health-NGO mechanism.    |
| DF-CA-06 | Emergency Treatment Fund                                | Federal/provincial/community | Provides targeted support responding to the toxic-drug and overdose crisis, including funding                                                                                        | Strong emergency and priority-response mechanism.       |

| Code     | Instrument                                          | Level              | Description and health-sector relevance                                                                                                                                                                       | Evidence assessment                                                                                             |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          |                                                     |                    | channelled to community-led projects.                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                 |
| DF-CA-07 | Mental Health Promotion Innovation Fund             | Federal            | Supports innovative, community-based mental-health promotion programs, including projects serving children, young people, caregivers and groups experiencing inequity.                                        | Strong community-project mechanism; generally restricted and time-limited.                                      |
| DF-CA-08 | Youth Mental Health Fund                            | Federal/community  | Provides strategic investment intended to improve community mental-health services and supports for young people and families.                                                                                | Strong current evidence, but program implementation and recipient arrangements require instrument-level coding. |
| DF-CA-09 | Indigenous Services Canada health funding           | Federal/Indigenous | Indigenous Services Canada funds health, wellness, mental-health, assisted-living and community programs delivered by Indigenous governments and organisations.                                               | Strong, large-scale equity-oriented support.                                                                    |
| DF-CA-10 | Indigenous mental-health and trauma supports        | Federal/Indigenous | Dedicated funding supports Indigenous mental-health, trauma-informed services, community wellness and culturally grounded responses.                                                                          | Strong targeted support, including substantial recent investment.                                               |
| DF-CA-11 | Federal social-development grants and contributions | Federal            | Employment and Social Development Canada funds nonprofit organisations for disability, inclusion, ageing, community development, skills and social-service initiatives that may have direct health relevance. | Broad and material, though not exclusively health-focused.                                                      |
| DF-CA-12 | New Horizons and seniors-related community funding  | Federal/provincial | Community organisations may access funding for social participation, ageing, inclusion and related health or wellbeing activities.                                                                            | Material complementary support; individual schemes vary.                                                        |
| DF-CA-13 | Health and medical research funding                 | Federal            | CIHR and other federal research programs fund universities, institutes, partnerships and eligible nonprofit organisations                                                                                     | Strong evidence; direct access may favour established research institutions.                                    |

| Code     | Instrument                                                  | Level                  | Description and health-sector relevance                                                                                                                                       | Evidence assessment                                                               |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          |                                                             |                        | for health research and knowledge translation.                                                                                                                                |                                                                                   |
| DF-CA-14 | Community-linked research partnerships                      | Federal                | Programs such as the College and Community Social Innovation Fund connect colleges with community organisations to address challenges including health and social innovation. | Strong capacity and partnership instrument rather than general operating funding. |
| DF-CA-15 | Federal grants to named nonprofit and charitable recipients | Federal                | The Open Government Portal records grants and contributions to charities and nonprofit organisations, including recipient, amount, program, purpose and agreement duration.   | Strong evidence of widespread use across departments.                             |
| DF-CA-16 | Provincial health service agreements                        | Provincial/territorial | Provinces and territories fund nonprofits to provide community health, mental-health, disability, home-care, palliative-care, public-health and social-support services.      | Highly material but jurisdiction-specific.                                        |
| DF-CA-17 | Transfer Payment Ontario                                    | Provincial             | Ontario operates a central system through which organisations can identify, apply for and manage provincial transfer-payment opportunities.                                   | Strong example of provincial grant infrastructure.                                |
| DF-CA-18 | Ontario nonprofit community grants                          | Provincial             | Ontario provides project, operational, capital and resilience funding through programs including the Ontario Trillium Foundation and other ministries.                        | Strong subnational support; not limited to health.                                |
| DF-CA-19 | Ontario community and seniors grants                        | Provincial             | Not-for-profit organisations can receive funding for programs supporting older adults, accessibility, social participation and healthy communities.                           | Strong targeted community support.                                                |
| DF-CA-20 | Provincial health authority and regional contracts          | Provincial/regional    | Regional health authorities and provincial ministries commission nonprofit providers for clinical, home, community, mental-health and addiction services.                     | Major support route, but no uniform national contracting model.                   |

| Code     | Instrument                           | Level                    | Description and health-sector relevance                                                                                                                                                   | Evidence assessment                                                                                                |
|----------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DF-CA-21 | Federal emergency and crisis funding | Federal/provincial       | Governments can establish targeted emergency funds and adapt contribution agreements during public-health or disaster events. The overdose Emergency Treatment Fund is a current example. | Demonstrated capacity but generally event-specific.                                                                |
| DF-CA-22 | Capital and accessibility grants     | Federal/provincial/local | Nonprofits can access selected capital, renovation, accessibility, technology or community-infrastructure funds.                                                                          | Material but dispersed across portfolios and jurisdictions.                                                        |
| DF-CA-23 | Regional development agency funding  | Federal/regional         | Federal regional development agencies support nonprofits through project funding, repayable contributions and capacity-building initiatives.                                              | Broad support but not primarily designed for health charities.                                                     |
| DF-CA-24 | Multi-year contribution agreements   | Federal/provincial       | Federal contribution agreements may cover multiple fiscal years, and published award data include agreement start and end dates.                                                          | Strong evidence that multi-year funding is available, but its prevalence in health NGOs is not readily quantified. |

### Direct financial support assessment

Canada has an extensive direct-support environment, especially for organisations working in:

- public health;
- mental health;
- substance use;
- Indigenous health;
- disability;
- ageing;
- health-system policy;
- research; and
- community services.

Health Canada and PHAC maintain dedicated funding pages, while federal awards are publicly disclosed. Provinces and territories add a second major funding layer through community-health contracts, transfer-payment programs and regional service commissioning.

The principal limitation is that most support is attached to:

- specified projects;
- eligible expenditures;
- government-defined outcomes;
- particular populations;
- contribution agreements; or
- purchased health and social services.

A contribution differs from a grant because it is subject to performance conditions and reporting requirements. The federal framework recognises both instruments, but does not create a general entitlement to unrestricted institutional support for health charities.

Broad core funding appears available mainly where an organisation is an established service provider, strategic intermediary or designated program partner.

### Indirect financial support

| Code     | Instrument                                            | Level                  | Description and relevance                                                                                                                                          | Evidence assessment                                                 |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IF-CA-01 | Federal income-tax exemption for registered charities | Federal                | Registered charities are generally exempt from income tax under the Income Tax Act, subject to continuing compliance.                                              | Strong national instrument.                                         |
| IF-CA-02 | Official donation receipts                            | Federal                | Registered charities and other qualified donees can issue official donation receipts for eligible gifts.                                                           | Strong donor-enablement mechanism.                                  |
| IF-CA-03 | Federal individual charitable donation tax credit     | Federal                | Individuals may claim a federal non-refundable tax credit for eligible donations.                                                                                  | Strong national donor incentive.                                    |
| IF-CA-04 | Provincial and territorial donation tax credits       | Provincial/territorial | Individuals may claim provincial or territorial donation tax credits in addition to the federal credit.                                                            | Strong additional incentive, although value varies by jurisdiction. |
| IF-CA-05 | Corporate charitable donation deduction               | Federal/provincial     | Corporations may generally deduct eligible charitable gifts, subject to Income Tax Act conditions and limits.                                                      | Established indirect support.                                       |
| IF-CA-06 | Donation carry-forward                                | Federal                | Unclaimed eligible donations may generally be carried forward for up to five years.                                                                                | Strong flexibility for donors.                                      |
| IF-CA-07 | GST/HST Public Service Bodies' Rebate                 | Federal/provincial     | Registered charities, qualifying nonprofits and selected public-service bodies may recover a portion of GST or the federal part of HST paid on eligible purchases. | Significant operating-cost concession.                              |
| IF-CA-08 | Enhanced GST/HST treatment for health bodies          | Federal/provincial     | Hospital authorities and eligible facility operators may qualify for higher rebate percentages for qualifying health-related activities.                           | Strong but limited to defined provider classifications.             |
| IF-CA-09 | Provincial HST rebate component                       | Provincial             | Charities resident in participating provinces may qualify for rebates of part of the provincial HST component, with percentages varying by province.               | Material but jurisdictionally variable.                             |
| IF-CA-10 | GST/HST small-supplier treatment                      | Federal                | Smaller nonprofits may fall below registration thresholds, while qualifying organisations may still claim certain public-service-body rebates.                     | Useful for small entities, but technically complex.                 |
| IF-CA-11 | Provincial property-tax relief                        | Provincial/local       | Charitable or nonprofit properties may qualify for exemptions, rebates or                                                                                          | Potentially material but not nationally uniform.                    |

| Code     | Instrument                                          | Level              | Description and relevance                                                                                                                                                                         | Evidence assessment                                                |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          |                                                     |                    | relief depending on provincial legislation and municipal policy.                                                                                                                                  |                                                                    |
| IF-CA-12 | Provincial sales-tax concessions                    | Provincial         | In non-harmonised tax jurisdictions, separate provincial sales-tax treatment may apply to charities and nonprofits.                                                                               | Fragmented and province-specific.                                  |
| IF-CA-13 | Federal registration and filing access              | Federal            | CRA charity-registration and annual-return services are available online, with no separate commercial access fee.                                                                                 | Administrative facilitation rather than a major fiscal subsidy.    |
| IF-CA-14 | Government-backed loans and repayable contributions | Federal/provincial | Regional development and infrastructure programs may provide repayable contributions or finance to eligible nonprofits, but no universal health-charity loan or guarantee program was identified. | Partial and program-specific.                                      |
| IF-CA-15 | Regulatory or application fee waivers               | Mixed              | Some charity and grant processes are free, but no comprehensive health-charity fee-waiver framework was located.                                                                                  | Fragmented.                                                        |
| IF-CA-16 | Import and customs concessions                      | Federal            | No broad standing customs or import exemption for ordinary domestic health charities was identified.                                                                                              | Evidence gap.                                                      |
| IF-CA-17 | Indirect-cost allowance in contribution agreements  | Federal            | Indirect and administrative costs may be eligible where expressly permitted by program terms and the funding agreement.                                                                           | Weaker and less automatic than the US federal de minimis approach. |

### Indirect financial support assessment

Canada provides a strong tax-support framework for registered charities through:

- income-tax exemption;
- official donation receipting;
- federal donor tax credits;
- provincial and territorial donor credits;
- corporate donation deductions; and
- GST/HST rebates.

Only registered charities and other qualified donees can issue official receipts that enable individual credits or corporate deductions. The CRA maintains a searchable list that includes registration status, contact information, activities and financial information.

The GST/HST Public Service Bodies' Rebate is a particularly relevant indirect instrument because it reduces unrecoverable consumption-tax costs for charities and qualifying nonprofits. Enhanced treatment may apply to recognised hospital authorities and qualifying healthcare facilities.

Canada is less strong on indirect-cost recovery. Federal program funds may cover indirect costs when the specific opportunity and agreement permit them, but the audit did not identify a universal minimum overhead rate comparable to the United States' federal de minimis mechanism.

## Operational support

| Code     | Instrument                                      | Level   | Description and relevance                                                                                                                   | Evidence assessment                                                              |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OS-CA-01 | Canada Revenue Agency Charities Directorate     | Federal | Registers and regulates charities, publishes guidance and administers annual charity reporting.                                             | Strong national infrastructure.                                                  |
| OS-CA-02 | Online charity registration and administration  | Federal | Organisations can apply, maintain information and increasingly file charity returns through CRA online services.                            | Strong digital access, although the application remains legally detailed.        |
| OS-CA-03 | CRA List of Charities                           | Federal | Publicly searchable register provides charity status, activities, contact details and financial information.                                | Strong transparency and donor-verification mechanism.                            |
| OS-CA-04 | Annual T3010 return                             | Federal | All registered charities must file an annual information return within six months of the fiscal year end.                                   | Strong accountability mechanism.                                                 |
| OS-CA-05 | Rapid publication of online T3010 data          | Federal | Online returns are processed immediately, with public financial information generally appearing on the List of Charities the following day. | Strong reporting transparency.                                                   |
| OS-CA-06 | Open Government grants and contributions portal | Federal | Searchable records disclose federal grants and contributions, including recipient, purpose, amount and duration.                            | Strong award transparency.                                                       |
| OS-CA-07 | Proactive disclosure requirements               | Federal | Treasury Board guidelines require proactive reporting of federal grant and contribution awards.                                             | Strong central transparency rule.                                                |
| OS-CA-08 | Federal grants and funding finder               | Federal | Canada.ca provides a central entry point directing applicants to government funding opportunities.                                          | Useful navigation tool, though not a single application portal.                  |
| OS-CA-09 | Health Canada and PHAC funding portals          | Federal | Dedicated pages identify health-specific grant and contribution opportunities and program status.                                           | Strong sector-specific discoverability.                                          |
| OS-CA-10 | Departmental online grant systems               | Federal | Departments operate systems such as Grants and Contributions Online Services for applications and agreement administration.                 | Strong digital capability, but separate departmental systems create duplication. |
| OS-CA-11 | Policy on Transfer Payments                     | Federal | Establishes government-wide roles, responsibilities and accountability for grants, contributions and other transfer-payment programs.       | Strong common governance framework.                                              |
| OS-CA-12 | Directive on Transfer Payments                  | Federal | Requires departments to tailor transfer-payment administration and oversight using measured responses to risk.                              | Strong proportionality principle.                                                |
| OS-CA-13 | Risk-based recipient monitoring and audits      | Federal | Federal guidance provides for risk-informed monitoring and recipient audits rather than identical controls for every recipient.             | Strong formal proportionality instrument.                                        |

| Code     | Instrument                                               | Level               | Description and relevance                                                                                                                                             | Evidence assessment                                               |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OS-CA-14 | Funding agreement before payment                         | Federal             | A contribution funding agreement must generally be executed before payment is made, supporting clarity but potentially delaying commencement.                         | Clear control mechanism with possible accessibility implications. |
| OS-CA-15 | Health Canada payment service standards                  | Federal             | Health Canada publishes standards for acknowledging applications and issuing grant or contribution payments after required documentation is approved.                 | Strong, measurable timeliness instrument.                         |
| OS-CA-16 | PHAC payment service standard                            | Federal             | PHAC commits to issuing grant and contribution payments within 30 business days after receiving and approving required documentation, with an 85% performance target. | Strong published standard.                                        |
| OS-CA-17 | CanadaBuys                                               | Federal             | National federal procurement platform provides tender opportunities, registration information and contracting guidance.                                               | Strong procurement infrastructure.                                |
| OS-CA-18 | Federal procurement data                                 | Federal             | CanadaBuys provides downloadable tender and contract-award datasets, while the Open Government Portal publishes contracts above disclosure thresholds.                | Strong transparency infrastructure.                               |
| OS-CA-19 | Procurement Assistance Canada                            | Federal             | Offers tools and assistance to help suppliers navigate federal procurement, registration and opportunity identification.                                              | Strong supplier capacity-building measure.                        |
| OS-CA-20 | Provincial funding portals                               | Provincial          | Provinces operate separate opportunity and transfer-payment systems, including Transfer Payment Ontario.                                                              | Strong local access but adds fragmentation.                       |
| OS-CA-21 | Indigenous funding portal and program navigation         | Federal             | Canada.ca maintains consolidated information on funding programs for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Indigenous organisations.                                        | Strong targeted discoverability.                                  |
| OS-CA-22 | Indigenous organisational and community capacity support | Federal             | Funding supports Indigenous community leadership, health services, research capacity and self-determined initiatives.                                                 | Strong equity-oriented operational support.                       |
| OS-CA-23 | Community and research partnership infrastructure        | Federal             | Research programs connect academic institutions and community organisations, giving NGOs access to facilities, expertise and evaluation capacity.                     | Strong but program-specific.                                      |
| OS-CA-24 | Provincial health-system integration                     | Provincial/regional | Nonprofit providers participate in regional health, mental-health, home-care and public-health delivery and referral pathways.                                        | Material but highly variable by province and service.             |

| Code     | Instrument                                | Level              | Description and relevance                                                                                                                                                                    | Evidence assessment      |
|----------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| OS-CA-25 | Health data and referral integration      | Mixed              | Community organisations may participate in provincial health information, referral and coordinated-care arrangements, but no universal Canada-wide NGO integration mechanism was identified. | Moderate and fragmented. |
| OS-CA-26 | Shared infrastructure and capital support | Federal/provincial | Selected programs fund accessibility, facilities, equipment and community infrastructure, but access is tied to particular schemes rather than a general entitlement.                        | Moderate.                |
| OS-CA-27 | Fund-holder or intermediary access        | Mixed              | Some programs allow partnerships or intermediaries to hold and administer funds, but no uniform national fiscal-sponsorship mechanism was identified.                                        | Partial evidence.        |
| OS-CA-28 | Import facilitation                       | Federal            | No broad operational mechanism for expedited imports by domestic health charities was identified.                                                                                            | Evidence gap.            |

#### Instrument coverage summary

| Taxonomy group                      | Coverage               | Overall assessment                                                            |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Direct grants and contributions     | Broad                  | Extensive federal and provincial programs across health and social priorities |
| Commissioning and service contracts | Broad                  | Especially important at provincial, territorial and regional levels           |
| Core or unrestricted funding        | Limited–moderate       | Available selectively, but most support is program- or service-specific       |
| Multi-year funding                  | Moderate               | Multi-year agreements exist, but prevalence is not transparent                |
| Emergency support                   | Demonstrated           | Targeted emergency and crisis mechanisms can be established                   |
| Tax concessions                     | Strong                 | Income-tax exemption, donation receipting and multiple donor credits          |
| GST/HST relief                      | Strong                 | Public-service-body rebates reduce eligible operating costs                   |
| Indirect-cost recovery              | Limited–moderate       | Permitted by some programs but not protected through a universal rate         |
| Registration facilitation           | Strong                 | Central CRA regulation and increasingly digital administration                |
| Grant transparency                  | Strong                 | Federal award disclosure is comprehensive and searchable                      |
| Procurement access                  | Strong                 | CanadaBuys, contract disclosure and supplier assistance                       |
| Capacity building                   | Moderate–strong        | Particularly through Indigenous, research and community programs              |
| Health-system integration           | Moderate               | Significant provincial involvement but no uniform national framework          |
| Government-backed finance           | Limited                | Program-specific repayable contributions exist                                |
| Infrastructure access               | Moderate               | Capital and accessibility grants exist but are fragmented                     |
| Import facilitation                 | Limited/not identified | No general health-charity mechanism found                                     |

## Canada scorecard

### Scoring table

| Dimension                      | Score                                        | Summary                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Transparency                | <b>3 – Comprehensive</b>                     | Strong charity, grant, contribution, contract and program disclosure systems                                                             |
| 2. Accessibility/admin burden  | <b>2 – Established but uneven</b>            | Extensive guidance and online systems exist, but federal-provincial fragmentation and contribution requirements create burden            |
| 3. Funding quality             | <b>2 – Established but uneven</b>            | Broad and sometimes multi-year funding, but most support is restricted and indirect-cost recovery is inconsistent                        |
| 4. Timeliness and reliability  | <b>2 – Established but uneven</b>            | Health Canada and PHAC publish measurable payment standards, but performance and renewal evidence are incomplete across the wider system |
| 5. Equity and inclusion        | <b>3 – Comprehensive in framework design</b> | Strong Indigenous, linguistic, disability, rural and priority-population instruments                                                     |
| 6. Proportional accountability | <b>2 – Established but uneven</b>            | Federal transfer-payment policy is explicitly risk-based, but cumulative federal and provincial compliance remains significant           |
| 7. Operational enablement      | <b>2 – Established but uneven</b>            | Strong federal portals and assistance, but health-system integration and provincial access remain fragmented                             |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>16/21</b>                                 | <b>A developed, transparent but federally fragmented framework</b>                                                                       |
| <b>Mean</b>                    | <b>2.29/3</b>                                | —                                                                                                                                        |

#### 1. Transparency — Score: 3/3

Canada has a strong federal transparency architecture.

The Open Government Portal provides searchable federal grants and contributions data showing:

- recipient;
- program;
- agreement amount;
- start date;
- end date; and
- purpose.

Treasury Board guidelines require proactive disclosure of grant and contribution awards. Federal contracts are separately searchable, and CanadaBuys makes procurement and contracting datasets available for download.

The CRA List of Charities gives the public access to registration status, organisational activities and financial information. Online T3010 returns are processed immediately, with the public financial component generally appearing the next day.

Funding opportunities remain dispersed across Canada.ca, Health Canada, PHAC, departmental portals and provincial systems. This affects ease of navigation but does not outweigh the quality of the underlying disclosure.

**Score rationale:** Canada provides comprehensive, searchable public evidence on charity status, federal grants, contribution agreements and contracts.

## 2. Accessibility and administrative burden — Score: 2/3

Canada provides:

- a federal funding finder;
- health-specific funding pages;
- online application systems;
- CRA digital charity services;
- CanadaBuys;
- Procurement Assistance Canada;
- provincial grant portals; and
- targeted Indigenous funding navigation.

The federal transfer-payment framework also encourages administration proportionate to recipient and program risk.

Nevertheless, organisations may need to navigate:

1. federal or provincial incorporation;
2. CRA charity registration;
3. annual T3010 reporting;
4. separate departmental funding portals;
5. program-specific applications;
6. contribution agreements;
7. provincial transfer-payment systems;
8. regional health authority contracting;
9. provincial tax rules; and
10. procurement registration.

Contribution applications may require detailed budgets, outcomes, performance measures, risk controls, partnerships and evaluation plans. A funding agreement must generally be completed before payment, which protects accountability but can delay mobilisation.

**Score rationale:** The systems are well documented and increasingly digital, but accessing support requires substantial administrative capacity and navigation across multiple levels of government.

## 3. Funding quality — Score: 2/3

Canada provides broad and sometimes substantial support through federal health grants, provincial service agreements, Indigenous health funding and community programs. Published grant data show that agreements may cover more than one fiscal year, and some funding supports organisational capability, infrastructure and community-sector development.

There are also fiscal measures that improve funding quality, particularly GST/HST rebates for charities, qualifying nonprofits and eligible healthcare bodies.

However, most direct funding remains:

- restricted;
- competitive;
- output-linked;
- project-specific;
- population-specific; or
- governed through contribution conditions.

Indirect costs are eligible only where permitted by the program and agreement. Canada does not appear to provide a universal minimum indirect-cost rate for federal health-charity awards.

The desk search also did not establish consistent:

- inflation indexation;
- full-cost recovery;
- renewal rights;
- minimum contract duration; or
- organisational core funding.

**Score rationale:** The scale and variety of funding warrant a score of 2, but unrestricted and full-cost funding are not sufficiently systematic for a score of 3.

#### 4. Timeliness and reliability — Score: 2/3

Canada performs relatively strongly in publishing health-specific payment standards.

PHAC commits to issuing grant and contribution payments within 30 business days after receipt and approval of required documentation, with a target of meeting the standard in 85% of cases. Health Canada publishes similar standards and historical performance results for relevant programs.

This is stronger desk evidence than was identified for Australia and provides a concrete performance benchmark. However, the standard begins only after the required documentation is received and approved. It does not establish:

- how long assessment and approval take;
- how quickly agreements are executed;
- whether provincial agencies meet comparable standards;
- whether renewal decisions are issued early enough;
- how often recipients experience funding gaps; or
- whether late payments trigger compensation.

The 85% target also means the standard is not expected to be achieved universally.

**Score rationale:** Published payment standards and performance reporting support a score of 2, but system-wide reliability across federal, provincial and regional funding is not demonstrated.

#### 5. Equity and inclusion — Score: 3/3

Canada's framework contains extensive targeted support for:

- First Nations;
- Inuit;
- Métis communities;
- official-language minority communities;
- people with disability;
- rural and remote populations;
- people affected by substance-use harms;
- young people;
- older adults; and
- communities experiencing health inequities.

Indigenous Services Canada operates dedicated funding programs for Indigenous and northern communities and organisations. Recent federal investment included nearly CAD\$1.4 billion for urban Indigenous services, mental-health and trauma supports, and assisted living on reserve.

The Official Languages Health Program provides a separate mechanism addressing access for official-language minority communities. Mental-health promotion programs explicitly prioritise groups susceptible to inequity.

The score reflects formal framework design, not a finding that inequities have been eliminated or that Indigenous and rural organisations experience equal administrative access.

**Score rationale:** Equity-oriented funding is broad, visible and embedded across multiple major federal portfolios and population-specific programs.

#### 6. Proportional accountability — Score: 2/3

The federal Policy and Directive on Transfer Payments provide a formal framework for grants and contributions. The directive expressly permits a measured response to risk throughout the transfer-payment lifecycle. Federal recipient-audit guidance similarly supports risk-informed oversight.

This is an important strength because it allows departments to adjust:

- monitoring;
- reporting;
- payment arrangements;
- audit activity; and
- control requirements according to recipient and program risk.

The annual T3010 creates a consistent charity-reporting mechanism, and online filing improves efficiency. However, Canada does not appear to use a simple charity-size reporting tier system equivalent to New Zealand's four financial-reporting tiers. CRA guidance recommends professionally audited financial statements for charities with income over CAD\$250,000, but this is not the same as a comprehensive risk-tiered statutory framework.

Recipients may also face cumulative reporting to:

- the CRA;
- a federal department;
- a provincial ministry;
- a regional health authority;
- an evaluator; and
- additional project funders.

**Score rationale:** Risk-based federal principles are strong, but cumulative reporting and jurisdictional duplication prevent the highest score.

#### 7. Operational enablement — Score: 2/3

Canada has significant enabling infrastructure:

- the CRA Charities Directorate;
- a searchable charity register;
- federal funding portals;
- Health Canada and PHAC opportunity pages;
- the Open Government grants database;
- Grants and Contributions Online Services;
- CanadaBuys;
- Procurement Assistance Canada;
- provincial transfer-payment portals;
- Indigenous funding navigation; and
- community-research partnership programs.

The framework supports organisations to identify funding, apply, manage agreements, bid for contracts and verify public awards.

The system is less comprehensive in relation to:

- common NGO service agreements;
- integrated national referral pathways;
- routine access to health data;
- shared back-office infrastructure;
- standardised provincial commissioning;
- broad fiscal-host arrangements; and
- health-charity-specific procurement preferences.

Health services are largely administered provincially, meaning integration opportunities depend heavily on location and program type.

**Score rationale:** Strong federal and provincial enabling tools exist, but they do not form a single coherent national NGO-support system.

### Evidence gaps

| Evidence gap                                                                       | Why it matters                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Total government funding received specifically by health charities                 | Federal disclosure cannot easily isolate the complete health-charity sector     |
| Provincial and territorial health-NGO spending                                     | Needed to assess the largest service-delivery funding layer                     |
| Percentage of agreements that provide core funding                                 | Distinguishes organisational support from activity purchasing                   |
| Percentage of health agreements lasting three or more years                        | Indicates continuity and workforce stability                                    |
| Treatment of inflation and wage increases                                          | Determines whether agreement value is maintained                                |
| Standard approach to indirect costs                                                | Needed to assess true full-cost recovery                                        |
| Average application assessment time                                                | Published payment standards start after approval                                |
| Average contract execution time                                                    | Important for service commencement                                              |
| Percentage of payments meeting standards                                           | Some program performance is reported, but not comprehensively across government |
| Provincial payment standards                                                       | Needed for a fair federal-system comparison                                     |
| Frequency of renewal gaps                                                          | Indicates reliability and cash-flow exposure                                    |
| Application success rates by organisation size                                     | Needed to test practical accessibility                                          |
| Funding access for Indigenous organisations compared with mainstream organisations | Needed to assess implementation of equity mechanisms                            |
| Administrative cost of federal and provincial compliance                           | Needed for an objective burden measure                                          |
| Access to provincial health-data systems                                           | Determines real operational integration                                         |
| Use of common service agreements                                                   | Could reduce duplication across departments and health authorities              |
| Government-backed finance for general health charities                             | No broad national facility was located                                          |
| Import concessions                                                                 | No broad health-charity instrument was identified                               |

## Policy interpretation

Canada's framework is best characterised as a federally regulated and tax-supported charity system combined with provincially delivered health-service commissioning.

Its principal strengths are:

1. comprehensive federal grant and contract disclosure;
2. central charity regulation and public financial reporting;
3. strong federal and provincial donor tax credits;
4. GST/HST rebates for charities and health bodies;
5. health-specific grant and contribution programs;
6. published Health Canada and PHAC payment standards;
7. formal risk-based transfer-payment rules;
8. substantial Indigenous health and community funding;
9. federal procurement assistance; and
10. provincial transfer-payment infrastructure.

Its principal vulnerabilities are:

1. fragmented federal and provincial access;
2. restricted rather than unrestricted funding;
3. inconsistent indirect-cost recovery;
4. limited evidence on indexation and renewals;
5. substantial application and reporting requirements;
6. variable provincial health-system integration;
7. no single national NGO commissioning framework;
8. limited common infrastructure or data access; and
9. weak nationwide evidence on actual payment performance.

## Country fiche conclusion

Canada provides an extensive government-support environment for health charities and NGOs through federal grants, provincial service agreements, Indigenous health funding, tax concessions, donor credits, GST/HST rebates, procurement access and community-sector programs.

Its strongest features are transparency, targeted equity mechanisms, published health-funding payment standards and formal risk-based transfer-payment administration.

Its central weakness is fragmentation. Health charities may need to navigate the CRA, several federal departments, provincial ministries, regional health systems and different grant or procurement portals. Most support remains tied to projects, services and government-defined outcomes, while core funding, indirect-cost recovery and renewal reliability are not consistently guaranteed.

**Desk score: 16/21, or 2.29/3.** Canada is therefore classified as having a developed, transparent and equity-oriented but federally fragmented government-support framework. Its most transferable lesson is the use of published payment service standards and performance targets for health grants and contributions.

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