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## **Consider our future: youth bring message to premiers as health accord negotiations heat up**

[Victoria] A delegation of youth gathered at the Council of the Federation meeting today to welcome the premiers to B.C. with a message: the future of the health care system is in question and we want a say.

“Young people have a stake in the future of our health care system,” said delegation member Vince Terstappen. “Discussions in preparation for the 2014 Health Accord are excellent opportunities for all of the provinces to work together to listen and respond to the input of young people.”

The delegates, including students and young doctors, brought umbrellas as gifts to the premiers to symbolize health coverage for all, joking that the premiers would need them for their stay in rainy B.C.

Rupinder Brar, a medical student, noted that she see the new accord as an opportunity to expand universal public health care. “We need to be creating a national pharmacare program and coverage for home and community care services like residential care and home support,” she said.

“We appreciate our health care system and view equality and equal access as core values,” said Terstappen. “We understand the importance of taking care of each other and want the 2014 Health Accord to reflect these values.”

The federal-provincial agreement that provides federal funds to provinces and territories expires in 2014. The federal government recently indicated that it intends to cut federal transfers.

The premiers’ umbrellas each came with a note, including the phrase: “We want an accord that ensures that when you need care, you’re covered – no matter where you live, how much money you have, or who you are.”

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