



ONE ELECTION AWAY...

FROM A STRONGER PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

When Tommy Douglas, founding leader of the NDP, introduced Canada's first universal and public health care system, he envisioned a Canada where no parent would have to choose between putting food on the table and making sure their child gets the care they need. Our public health care system has come to define our commitment to one another as Canadians.

But after decades of federal neglect, our public health care system is dangerously overstretched.

Waiting lists keep growing. Prescription drugs are among the highest in the OECD. We're asking health care workers to do more, for less. Private clinics that serve the wealthy and weaken the public system are starting to spring up. And as Canada's population keeps growing and aging, the Conservatives cut federal funding by \$36 billion over the next 10 years.

This year, we've already seen \$987 million in cuts, which could mean 2,500 fewer hospital beds or 15,000 fewer nursing staff.

We must reverse the cuts to public health care to ensure that our system remains public and that every Canadian gets the care they need, when they need it.

The Conservatives' record

The Conservatives' record on health care is billions in cuts, longer wait times, skyrocketing prescription drug costs and a growing number of private clinics.

The Conservatives:

- » Cut \$36 billion in funding for health care over the next decade.
- » Refused to renew the Health Accord that guaranteed health care funding to provinces and territories.
- » Eliminated the independent Health Council of Canada, whose mandate was to provide a national, system-wide perspective on health care reform and work to improve health care access, quality and effectiveness.
- » Refused to invest in home care, long-term care and palliative care.
- » Refused to discuss a safe, affordable, public national drug plan.

The Liberals' promises

The Liberals cannot be counted on to show the leadership needed to strengthen Canada's health care system. The Liberals:

- » Were the first to cut health care in 1995 by slashing billions from federal health care funding to provinces and territories.
- » Won't commit to reversing the cuts or investing in programs like home care or long-term care.
- » Have a record of cutting the wages and benefits of health care workers instead of respecting them for the important work they do – especially when in government in provinces across Canada.

The NDP's commitment

An NDP government would make sure all Canadians get the health care they need, when they need it. The NDP will:

- » Reverse the Conservatives' \$36 billion dollar cuts, which means stable funding for provinces who invest in front line services like hospitals.
- » Stop the privatization of health care.
- » Invest in public home and community care, long-term care and palliative care.
- » Bring in a safe, affordable, public national drug plan.
- » Ensure that Aboriginal peoples receive the same health care as other Canadians.

Why do we need to strengthen the public system?

Canada's public health care system means all Canadians can get quality health care services, wherever they may be in Canada. No one should ever have to choose between putting food on the table and getting the care they need.

The Conservatives' \$36 billion dollars in cuts will hurt our public system – Canada's population is continuously growing, and it is aging. This is not the time for cuts. Canadians will have to wait longer for care, and the number of available hospital beds and nursing staff will be reduced.

Reversing these cuts coupled with targeted investments in home care and long-term care will allow for caregivers to get the support they need and for seniors to receive quality care. Public health care should be expanded so that we take profit out of all health services and invest in services so that all Canadians receive quality care.

Canada is the only country for which its public health care system does not include a national drug plan to make sure that all Canadians can afford the prescription drugs they need. Costs for prescription drugs in Canada are among the highest in the OECD. We need a national drug plan that's safe, public and affordable.

Health care is important to all Canadians, and that's why we need federal leadership, and a government that will make targeted investments to protect and expand health care – for all of us.

With Tom Mulcair and his NDP team, we're one election away from a stronger public health care system that works for every Canadian.