

Liberal Party of Canada Response

1. Informal caregivers are enormously valuable to the Canadian health-care system, saving it about \$9.6 billion each year. What will you do to support these hard-working and valuable caregivers?

In 2017, The Liberal Party showed its support for caregivers when we simplified the existing system of tax relief for caregivers by replacing three existing tax credits with a single new Canada Caregiver Credit, which will provide better support to those who need it most and apply to caregivers whether or not they live with their family member.

We have also introduced new measures to support caregivers through enhanced benefits through Employment Insurance, including the new 15-week benefit for those supporting a loved one who is critically ill or injured. This benefit alone provides up to \$8,424 more help to caregivers as of this year.

Our government also moved forward with giving more families the ability to hire caregivers to provide care for their loved ones with high medical needs by eliminating the \$1,000 Labour Market Impact Assessment processing fee.

If re-elected, we will give more help for these family caregivers by immediately doubling the Child Disability Benefit. This tax-free monthly benefit helps children whose impairment is severe, and prolonged by certain conditions such as learning and speech disabilities, psychological disorders, and autism spectrum disorder, among others. This increased benefit would give families of a child with a disability more than \$2,800 in extra help, right away, with up to \$5,664 in total financial support available each year – giving more than 150,000 children and their families more money to help with the costs of care.

We will continue to work with experts, stakeholders and families on further measures to ensure that caregivers continue to have access to the full range of supports they need for the important job they do.

2. In 2015, more than 1 in 5 Canadians reported that they or someone in their home did not take their medications because of cost. What will you do to ensure that Canadians have affordable access to prescription medications?

No Canadian should have to choose between paying for prescription drugs and putting food on the table. While Canadians are proud of our health care system, many are still forced to make sometimes decisions. These decisions are even more difficult when it comes to the health needs of children and youth, which put even greater strain on any family.

That is why, early in our mandate, we undertook bold action to tackle unacceptably high drug prices in Canada. Through a series of reforms - which represent the most significant changes to drug pricing regulation in more than three decades - Canadians will save approximately \$13 billion over the next decade. This lays the groundwork for the important next steps we will take to implement universal national pharmacare, so that all Canadians can access the medications they need at an affordable price.

As a government and as a party, we gratefully accept the report by Dr. Hoskins and the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare and the report is an important step in laying the foundation for a national pharmacare program.

We have already committed to working together with provinces and territories to create a Canadian Drug Agency that will make medications more affordable by negotiating better drug prices on behalf of all Canadians. In particular, we know that the cost of many drugs for rare diseases can be astronomical, so we are putting in place a national strategy for rare disease drugs to help Canadians get the life-saving drugs that they need.

If re-elected, we will work closely with the provinces and territories, and our partners and stakeholders in order to achieve universal national pharmacare. As we work toward this goal we will implement a national formulary, and establish the Canada Drug Agency. Our newly announced investment of an additional at least \$6 billion over the next four years will include dedicated funding to further the progress we have already made towards universal pharmacare for all Canadians, as guided by the Advisory Council.

3. In the home and community care sector, technology plays a central role in enabling remote patient monitoring and interventions in a patient's home. This makes it easier for Canadians to access efficient, high-quality, and cost-effective health care remotely. How will you support technological innovation beyond hospital walls, including the scale-up and spread of existing technologies?

Our government supports ongoing efforts at Health Canada and the Public Health Agency to not only support but drive innovation in health care. An example of this is the Regulatory Review of Drugs and Devices, which focuses on making the regulatory system more efficient, support timely access to therapeutic products, and build better linkages within the health care system as a whole.

Our government's ongoing project to build better access to digital health technologies is also well underway. The goals of this project are:

- faster times to market for innovative devices that meet health care system needs, resulting in improved health outcomes for Canadians;
- increased technical review capacity to make decisions about emerging innovative technologies, supporting more rapid access to digital health technology devices;
- improved alignment and collaboration with counterpart regulatory and HTA organizations to get safe and innovative products to market faster

These and other projects like them are important means by which the federal government can help to lead on health care, ensuring more Canadians have access to efficient, cost-effective and high-quality health care, no matter where they may be. Our party supports continued expansion of high-speed internet into remote communities - and we have a serious, fully funded plan to ensure that all Canadians have access by 2030 - so that these technological advances can be fully harnessed across the country.

4. We are seeing the negative effects of climate change on the health of Canadians already. Changing climate patterns are leading to the spread of infectious disease,

cardiorespiratory impacts, longer allergy seasons, displacement-related mental health concerns, heat stroke, heat-related deaths, and more. What will you do to prevent and reduce the negative health effects from climate change?

The Liberal Party believes Canadians should have confidence in the air they breathe and ensuring that is a responsibility we take very seriously. Air pollution is a serious threat to the health of Canadians, and that's exactly why we're putting a price on it.

Our serious plan to fight climate change will protect the health and safety of all Canadians and we will continue to work with partners to ensure cleaner air, fight cancer and build healthy communities.

In this campaign, we have also announced the following new initiatives we would implement, if re-elected:

- Establish net zero emissions by 2050, including additional initiatives to exceed our Paris targets by 2030;
- Planting 2 billion new trees over the next decade in order to reduce pollution and unlock the power of nature in fighting climate change;
- Help people affected by climate related disasters with a new E.I. Disaster Assistance Benefit so that people can get the help they need from the moment a major event hits;
- Strengthen the Canadian Environmental Protection Act so we can take further action to cut down on toxins, hazardous chemicals and other substances that pollute our environment and threaten our health;
- Slash corporate taxes in half for companies that develop technologies or manufacture products that have zero emissions so we can unlock the innovation potential of clean products;
- Continue to lead by example and ensure all federal buildings run on clean electricity by 2022; and
- Leverage the purchasing power of the federal government to further drive clean technology adoption.

Climate change represents one of the gravest threats to Canadians' health, with the potential to claim a quarter of a million lives worldwide every year by 2030, and cost health care systems billions. Canadians are already feeling the impact - from asthma attacks during wildfires to lives lost because of heatwaves. In addition to putting a price on pollution, our government will continue to invest in a variety of programs and initiatives to help address the dangers that climate change poses to Canadians' health.