



## The Facts:

The Canadian healthcare system covers Canadians living in the 10 provinces and three territories. It is funded and administered by the federal and provincial governments. Healthcare is provided free to all residents of Canada.

The most recent funding agreement was called the Canada Health Accord. The Conservative government did not agree to renew it after it expired in 2014.

## The Parties:

### Conservatives:

- Reduce annual health funding to provinces to 3% each year (instead of current increases of 6% annually).
- Promises incentives for doctors and nurses to practise in rural and remote areas.
- Has been criticized for making it very difficult for some refugee claimants, including children, to access health care in Canada, downloading the costs on to the provinces in a bid to prevent “bogus” claimants from coming to Canada. A Federal Court has found this policy to be discriminatory and unconstitutional. The Conservative government is currently appealing this Federal Court Decision.
- Cut major funding to Aboriginal health research.
- Refuse to renew the Canada Health Accord, or meet with provincial leaders as a group to negotiate a new agreement.

### Liberals:

- Strengthen the federal government’s role in safeguarding the national health-care system; meet with the premiers on how to improve the system in areas such as wait times, affordability of prescription drugs, and availability of homecare.
- Want a Canadian health promotion strategy to reduce obesity.
- Creation of national food policy to encourage healthier eating, and clearer food labelling.
- Offers incentives for doctors and nurses to practise in rural and remote areas.
- Would work with the provinces to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

### NDP:

- Restore the 6% annual increase to health-care transfers to the provinces.
- Support mental health programs in prisons.
- Pledge support for senior’s health care and palliative care.
- Pledges \$165 million to hire more doctors and nurses, repatriate Canadian health care workers practising abroad and fix credential recognition system for foreign doctors.
- Would create a Children’s Nutrition Initiative to provide healthy food in schools.
- Pledge to create a Canadian Food Strategy to encourage healthier eating.

### Green:

- Create a Canadian Disabilities Act and basic income program for the disabled.
- Would create a national food plan that focuses on local grown, health choices.
- Would create a national drug plan.
- Introduce dental plans.



## The Issues:

Free and accessible health care is highly valued by Canadians. However, concerns around wait times, special procedures, and the high cost of medication emerge as key issues. Furthermore, some private health care providers have challenged the public system in court.

Aboriginal communities have historically had less access to quality healthcare than the general population. Health care advocates say the Conservative government has downloaded the cost of health care onto the provinces and are not sharing the responsibility or establishing best practices.

## Where do Canadians Stand?

A majority of Canadians have consistently expressed support for a publicly-funded health care system, and are concerned it may be falling behind.

### Questions to ask candidates:

- Would your party aim to negotiate a new Health Accord with the provinces?
- Do you believe there are any circumstances when health care should be paid for?
- Should refugee claimants have full access to medical care while waiting for their claims to be processed?

